

JESUS CHRIST  
AND THE  
CIVILIZATION OF TO-DAY



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JESUS CHRIST  
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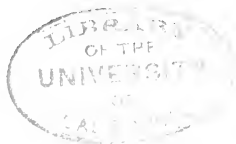
# JESUS CHRIST AND THE CIVILIZATION OF TO-DAY

THE ETHICAL TEACHING OF JESUS  
CONSIDERED IN ITS BEARINGS  
ON THE MORAL FOUNDATIONS  
OF MODERN CULTURE

BY

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GENERAL

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To

MY DEAR WIFE

*“Das ewige Weibliche  
Zieht uns hinan”*

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## PREFATORY NOTE

As indicated by the title, the scope of this work is limited to a consideration of the ethical teachings of Jesus Christ in their bearings on the spiritual life of civilization. No account is taken of the external events of Christ's life or of his deeds, except in so far as has seemed necessary to interpret the meaning and application of his teaching. No questions of dogmatic theology are directly considered, nor, on the other hand, does the author mean to imply that there may not be aspects of that life, of deep significance for the individual and the church, that lie beyond the purview of the present work. He is simply concerned here with ideas that seem to him to be of broad and primary significance for the entire moral foundations of western culture. He has felt compelled to take some account of eastern culture, since the two are now meeting in the world-arena. He has done this with diffidence, since his knowledge of the East is purely literary.

The primary aim of the work is practical, and it is addressed to all intelligent persons who are honestly and open-mindedly seeking to determine the relation of the words of the great Master of Life and Religion to their own lives and to the

complex and confused life of contemporary civilization. Hence, technical discussions in biblical criticism and in philosophy have been, so far as possible, avoided. Philosophical questions have been dealt with as briefly and clearly as possible. If the style of treatment may savour, to the specialist, of dogmatism, the author's reply is that he has threshed out, to the best of his ability, questions at issue in the philosophy of mind in a forthcoming work. To the specialist in New Testament criticism and theology the author would say further that, while he has avoided burdening a work of popular character with references, he has considered in great part the recent literature both German and English.

But the writer's wish will be satisfied if some intelligent seekers after truth in matters of conduct and life are led to a fuller appreciation of the present significance of the teaching of Him whose words are "Spirit and Life."

GENEVA, NEW YORK,  
January 10, 1907.



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CIVILIZATION OF TO-DAY





# JESUS CHRIST AND THE CIVILIZATION OF TO-DAY

## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTORY: PURPOSE AND STANDPOINT OF THE PRESENT WORK

THE aim of the following work is to offer an interpretation of the fundamental ethical principles of Jesus in their bearing on the problems of social life and individual destiny as these present themselves to the men of to-day. In estimating the meaning and value of any historical phenomenon we necessarily begin with the life, experience, and ideas of to-day. The past only gains meaning and worth for us as we bring it into living filiation and continuity with the present. This is even more deeply true of moral and spiritual history than of political and economic history. It seems to the present writer that no better test can be made of the permanent worth of the gospel of Jesus than that of determining how it bears on the moral and spiritual problems of life to-day. For the gospel is *life*, not theory. Although it involves theoretical propositions, it does not in itself consist primarily of theoretical propositions. The gospel of Jesus is a *way of conduct*, an

*attitude of soul or spirit*, and as such it must be judged.

The aim of the present work, then, is twofold. It seeks to discover the fundamental ethical needs of contemporary life, to determine by what principles of conduct the spiritual character of man and of civilization may be best preserved and developed. And it seeks to determine the bearings of Jesus' ethical teaching on this spiritual life of to-day.

I have attempted to bring out only the *fundamental principles* of Jesus' teaching, in their relation to contemporary tendencies of conduct and of ethical thought. The application in detail must be left to the reader. And here I believe I am in accord with Jesus' own method. Although he teaches by parables and single instances as well as by explicitly formulated principles, what he conveys is in every case a *dynamic principle* or *spiritual ideal* of conduct. The gospel is no system of casuistry, no network of minute and iron-bound prescriptions. Jesus supplies the quickening leaven; but it is an essential feature of his ethical teaching that the individual shall in each specific and concrete case direct his own actions by conscious and free thought and decision in the light of the principles laid down. The active participation of the whole personality is fundamental to right living as Jesus sees it.

The traditional ethics of Christian civilization are on trial to-day. No doubt the mass of men still assume their validity and pay them the tribute of at least

a theoretical recognition. But the conduct of men is in part actually guided by widely different motives and the authority of other than Christian principles begins to be boldly announced in some quarters. When Nietzsche proclaims the absolute supremacy of the stronger and more intelligent, exceptional individual, the "Over-man," over the mass of his fellows; when he attacks the Christian ideals of sympathy and service as the most egregious blunders in the matter of conduct that man has ever committed; when he finds in the assertion of the authority of these principles the conspiracy of the mass of weak men against the few strong; of the "domesticated human animal" against his natural and rightful lord, the exceptional individual, strong, cunning, and dominant, — Nietzsche is but drawing the correct ethical consequences that follow from the exclusive claim that the Darwinian doctrine of evolution, or the science of biology in general, is able to yield us a new sufficient and scientific ethics. And, in our practical, political, and commercial life, where Nietzsche has never been heard of, the catchwords of biological science are frequently employed to justify political oppression, industrial and civic wrong-doing.

We are told that the conquest, exploitation, and subjection of weaker and less enlightened peoples by the culture-nations of Europe and America is the "natural," and therefore inevitable, outcome of the "struggle for existence." The fittest survive, and the weaker must go to the wall. So it is in nature,

and so it must be in human society, we are told. The "trust," too, is a product of "evolution" and, if it crushes out competitors here and there by methods which the old-fashioned Christian moral consciousness revolts against, why all this is "natural" and "inevitable"! The labor union often seeks to justify intimidation and personal violence on the same grounds.

If men in business and in politics use lying and corruption, fraud, and "graft," to gain their ends, we are told that the "machine" is a necessary political device or that the "system" which exists must be conformed to and those who do business or go into politics must adopt the methods that have been employed and that have actually proved successful. And, in truth, our fundamental principle of ethics threatens to become the universal doctrine "that nothing succeeds like success." Now, there is no system of *morality* to be drawn from the *fact* of the *survival of the fittest* in the struggle for existence. For the *fittest* means nothing more in nature than the fact that certain species have *actually survived*. The fitness or goodness which consist simply in the survival value indicated by the power of adjustment to the natural environment have nothing to do with *moral worth*. Morality does not begin until we leave the realm of mere brute facts and judge in terms of *ideal worth or value*.

The naturalistic tendencies, to which I have briefly referred, are sufficiently symptomatic of our time.



No doubt, traditional Christian ethics, as an inheritance from the mediæval world, drew too sharp an antithesis between the natural and the spiritual. For example, the assertion of the higher spiritual virtue of celibacy over the married state was a great error. The separation by mediæval ethical thought of the higher spiritual realm from the sphere of common human activities and interests in family, community, state, science, and art set up a mistaken dualism that had serious consequences for history, consequences that our civilization is only beginning to recover from. Some of these consequences were — the vague and negative meanings attached to spirituality and the spiritual life in many quarters, the tendency to ascribe a magical efficacy to rites and ceremonies as means of snatching the soul from an evil world, the failure of the churches to make themselves effective forces in the evolution of contemporary civilization, their failure to welcome and to sanctify democracy as the direct consequence of the Master's teaching, and gladly to meet science and scholarship as instruments by which the spirit leads men into the truth that makes them free. We are learning better to-day, although we are still prone to identify heathen and mediæval motives and principles with the ethics of Jesus himself.

But, under the influence of biological philosophy, used as a tool to justify the selfish and power-loving ruthless instincts of the natural man, modern society swings toward the other extreme. Our civilization

is threatened by an ethical materialism, for which there are no limits of acquisition and indulgence except those of cunning and power. The ethical antithesis now stands between biological egoism and Christian altruism. Shall individual or national success be constituted the sole warrant of right, or are there universal ethical principles of righteousness? Shall the individual obey without stint his own selfish desires, shall he follow without limit his own immediate interests regardless of the well-being of others? What is the relation of the individual's action to social welfare and social righteousness? And back of this antithesis lies the more fundamental question, wherein consists the true essence of the individual? Has he a spiritual being or is he but a fleshly tissue, warmed by feeling, lighted up by consciousness, and aided in the struggle to gain mere life, by the auxiliary instrument of reason? Is reason but a tool for the increase of sensuous pleasure, and the diminution of pain?

The fundamental problems of ethics and religion are, in a final analysis, those of the real nature and destiny of the individual man. Our ethical principles must in the last resort depend upon our convictions as to the relation of the human self to the natural order or cosmos, and upon its relation to the world of spiritual values and ideals which have been built up in the course of civilization through the teachings and activities of moral and religious leaders.

If the ethics of traditional Christianity are on trial, this means that the most important spiritual constituents in the personal and social life of our civilization are on trial, too. And in this critical juncture we must, in order to determine anew what is permanent and pertinent in Christianity as a civilizing and ethical force, go back of the traditional Christian ethics, which is intermingled with many other elements, to the ethics of the founder. For the ethical conceptions that began to prevail in the church from the second and third centuries onward (indeed, one might say to some extent from the latter part of the first century), that held sway during the Middle Ages, and are still by many identified with the gospel, are really a compound of Jesus' teaching with that oriental dualism which had its several manifestations in Zoroastrianism, Manichæism, Mithraism, etc.;<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> On the relations of Zoroastrianism and Primitive Christianity see two articles by James Moffatt, in the *Hibbert Journal*, Vol. I., No. 4, and Vol. II., No. 2; on Mithraism see the little work by Franz Cumont, *The Mysteries of Mithra*, a résumé of his larger work on the same subject; on the general subject see A. Harnack, *History of Dogma*, Vol. I. (English translation), and the same writer's *The Expansion of Christianity in the First Three Centuries*. On the subject of Persian influence on Jewish religion in New Testament times see W. Bousset, *Die Religion des Judenthums im Neutestamentlichen Zeitalter*, *Zweite Auflage*, 1906. Of course, as one leaves Apostolic Christianity behind and goes forward through the history of thought and practice in the second, third, and fourth centuries, the influence of this oriental dualism becomes more pronounced in Christian thought and practice. Indeed, the same is true of purely Hellenic thought. How much more dualistic in both speculative theory and in prac-

and which filtered into Greek thought through the mysteries and through later Neoplatonism, spread over the Roman Empire, cropped out even in the teachings of St. Paul, and, through the influence of St. Augustine and his successors, left its powerful and morbid heritage to modern theology, and even gained a speculative outcrop in Descartes' philosophy of mind and body.

The *absolute* metaphysical dualism of mind and body, the absolute ethical dualism of flesh and spirit, the absolute theological dualism of God and the devil, has been in principle overcome by modern thought. What remains then of the supremacy of the spirit? Is the latter but a product of natural forces? The same question in philosophical form becomes this—is the mind a function of the bodily organism? And in theological guise—is God simply the order of physical nature?

I am convinced that true and permanently valid answers to these questions, in so far as they touch the fundamental problems of *conduct* or *ethics*, will be found in the teachings of Jesus; and it is in the light of this conviction that I shall herein attempt to set forth the ethical principles of the Master in their bearing on the ethical or spiritual problems of contemporary civilization, and more especially, of the

tical matters is the philosophy of Plotinus than that of his master Plato, or of Aristotle and the Stoics! Ancient thought dies out with the opposition of soul and body, good and evil, God and the world.

individual life. For, in the nature and destiny of the human person centre all the fundamental problems of ethics, metaphysics, and theology; and the fundamental contribution of Jesus to our practical thought and to our conceptions of things lies in his teaching concerning the ultimate nature and vocation of the human person.

Some readers will doubtless be surprised that I have not entered into a discussion of the date and authorship of the historic records or sources on which I have freely drawn for my materials, and have advanced no hypothesis as to the relative priority and historicity of Matthew, Mark, and Luke. I may as well say at once that I do not consider such a preliminary inquiry vital to the fulfilment of the aim set before me in this work. Furthermore, in my own opinion, apart from the external evidences of contemporary records, some systematic conception of Jesus' teaching and activity is the indispensable prerequisite to any sane and sober-minded discussion of the dates and historicity of the four gospels. The internal constitutions and relations of these works cannot be determined apart from such a conception. This attitude will doubtless seem to many of the "higher critics" of the New Testament a *ὑστερον πρότερον*, a putting of the cart before the horse. I will therefore proceed to explain and defend the position.

In the case of Jesus, as of any other great historical figure, we are dealing with a *personality* who has exerted a continuous historical influence

down to the present time. Great personalities are true *historical causes*. Alexander, Cæsar, Charlemagne, Napoleon I., started political movements whose effects continue and can be traced backward from the present time. So it is in the realm of science with Aristotle, Archimedes, Bacon, Newton, Kant, etc.; in art with Phidias, Michelangelo, Raphael, Beethoven, etc. These individuals have been true *historical causes*, *i.e.* they have continued to exercise influence in the development of humanity. The lives, thoughts, and activities of the mass of lesser individuals have been moulded by countless streams of mental and moral influences whose fountain heads are the characters, thoughts, and deeds of great persons, and whose channels are marked out in the change and continuity of the historical life and social institutions of mankind. These streams of mental influence, welling up from the mysterious fountain heads of human personality, have marked out their channels and beds in the evolution of social institutions — in the political state with its manifold forms; in the various genera and schools of art; in the commercial and industrial systems of the ages; in the systematic conceptions of science as these are added to and modified from age to age, etc.

Great personalities are the supreme interpreting and rationally directing forces in the historical evolution of man, and in any stage or phase of human evolution that we may select, will be found embedded the countless streams of tendencies that have issued

from the creative individuals who have originated new movements in civilization or at least have altered the direction of old ones.

Now Jesus is a preëminent historical force in the thoughts and lives of the members of our western civilization to-day as well as in the spirit and workings of a great historical institution, — the church. It may be said that his influence is on the wane. This has often been said before. But it cannot be denied that his personality is still a potent factor in the moral and spiritual life, both individual and social.

The primary witnesses to the reality of Jesus as a great historical force or originating centre of spiritual life are: 1. The existence and experiences of disciples to-day acting under his leadership and striving to live in accordance with his spirit. 2. The continuity of the life and tradition of discipleship in the Christian church. However much the church in its various branches may have grievously erred in falling away from the ethical spirit of the Master, however much it may in time past have forgotten religion in ecclesiasticism, ethics in dogmatic theology, the lowly spirit of love in the passion for authority and wealth; nevertheless, the continuous existence and development of the church is an abiding historical witness to the reality and perennial power of Jesus' personality and influence in the movement of civilization. Here, then, we have the actual evidences in personal experience, discipleship, and

in institutional continuity, of Jesus as a personal historical force.

And, when we go to the earliest documentary records to get the details of his life, or the principles of his teaching, we must not forget that we have to do with a *living personality* — with an *individual spiritual cause*. We must treat this person reverently and sympathetically in the integrity of his life and views. No one who is unable sympathetically to appreciate the many-sided and rich life of a great personal leader, who may be influential in society to-day, is competent to reconstruct the lives of great historical individuals. The historian himself must be a man of personal caliber and the weakness of much so-called "higher criticism" consists in the lack on the part of its authors of a vital and historical appreciation of the significance of personality.

In regard to our special subject of inquiry, it is not of first-rate importance whether Mark was written before or after 70 A.D., Luke and Matthew before or after 80 A.D., etc. The supremely important point is this — do we get from these first records of Jesus the impress of a powerful spiritual individuality and a coherent and comprehensive ethical and spiritual attitude toward life. We have, as I have said, in individual disciples and the continuous existence of the church as a factor in society our living witnesses to the continuing personal influence of Jesus. This personality has been a powerful historical cause, and is therefore real. And if, for our purpose, we can



find in the earliest records even the bare outline and suggestion of any system of principles of conduct, constituting an integral and vital whole, then these records must be trustworthy sources for the life and teaching of this preëminent historical personage with whom we are concerned as a great causal factor in the moral evolution of humanity. "In observing the lineaments of Jesus, the right focus was given not by his death nor even by his departure, but in the subsequent discipline of memory and obedience among his followers. Their increasing distance from the object tended in some degree to correct earlier mistakes of judgment in the direction of exaggeration or of undervaluing; by removing certain obscurities, the very lapse of time helped to purify and widen in the Christian community the powers of accurate appreciation. Hence the character and date of our extant gospels. Just as the full significance of the traits and issues bound up in the faith of Jesus could not be grasped by his original disciples until he ceased to move beside them,—he left them and they knew him,—so it proved practically an impossibility for them, even after their subsequent experience of reflection and reminiscence, to achieve the task of creating a final and adequate record. For that they could merely supply materials. It was enough in this for the disciples to be as their Master. Like Socrates and Epictetus, he was no author. He wrote once—and that upon the dust. His real epistles were to be found in the character and

experience of his followers (2 Cor. 3:3). Nor was it otherwise with them. For other hands than theirs the work of evangelic composition was reserved. It was completed, as perhaps it only could have been, by the *epigoni*. Even those who had received the tradition of the historical Jesus, *κατὰ σάρκα*, from his personal companions, found that his life in subsequent years opened out for them (John 12:16; 14:26; 16:13); it

‘Orbed into the perfect star  
They knew not, when they moved therein.’

But this insight of a second generation was not necessarily inferior at all points. On the contrary, it had some invaluable advantages. In the strict sense of the word, the gospels are not contemporary records. Even the earliest of them implies an interval between the facts and their record — bridged though that interval may be by continuous tradition and surviving witnesses. But so far from this distance being an altogether regrettable defect, it is in some aspects a profit. Until development has reached a certain stage, analysis will always remain inadequate; indeed, it is hardly possible for it to exist. Lapse of time is essential to a real conception of this as of any other history, for it is only after such an interval of experience and reflection that the meaning and bearings of the life in question come out in their true and sure significance. Interpretation is not bound fast to the contemporary standpoint. It requires

facts, but it requires them in perspective. The gospels in reality do more for us, written between 65 and 105, than they would have done if composed before 35. Drawn up after at least one generation had passed away, and written in a world rich with religious passion, speculation, and achievement, these writings give a wider and deeper account of their subject than any that would have been afforded by records composed in the morning of the Christian religion. During the actual lifetime of Jesus, or even immediately after his death, the vital principle of the Life was not to be grasped in its real unity and relationships. Paul understood the secret of Jesus more thoroughly than many who had trodden the roads of Galilee in his company, and listened to his arguments and teaching in the synagogues; and the writers of the Christian biography were not necessarily placed at any serious disadvantage for their task and mission by the fact that their vision was one not of sight but of insight, not of memory but of sympathy.”<sup>1</sup> “The living do not give up their secrets with the candour of the dead; one key is always excepted, and a generation passes before we can insure accuracy.” “Their *raison d'être* lay in the authoritative and binding power exercised by the words of Jesus over the primitive community from the very beginning, as well as in need, stirred by exigencies of time and place, for possessing that standard in an accessible and fairly uniform shape,

<sup>1</sup> Moffatt, *The Historical New Testament*, pp. 13-14.

for the purpose of personal conduct, missionary enterprise, and religious nourishment. The gospels, in fact, are the first Christian creed; they are the naïve expression of the creed in history.”<sup>1</sup>

I gladly quote these passages, since they seem to me admirably to indicate the right point of view from which to consider the problems of New Testament criticism and to be in harmony with the conception I have above outlined of the convincing evidence for the historical integrity of Jesus the Teacher as portrayed and reported in the four canonical gospels.

It seems to me an entirely wrong-headed procedure to lay down in advance some preconceived canon for testing the genuineness of Jesus’ utterances, as that, for instance, he could not have called himself the Son of God or the Son of Man in any unique sense. Let us first endeavour to get from the records, taken in their historical setting, a living impression of his personality and teaching as a whole before we proceed to strike out as unauthentic passage after passage of utterances accredited to Jesus and to wrest others from their obvious meanings.

One finds among representatives of the ultra-critical school of New Testament interpreters to-day a dogmatic bias almost as strong and perhaps as detrimental to a full appreciation of Jesus’ personality and teaching as the bias of ultraconservatives who tended to sacrifice the humanity of Jesus to

<sup>1</sup> Moffatt, *op. cit.*, p. 27.

his divinity and, accordingly, conducted the exegesis with the presuppositions that he was omniscient on all matters, that every word of the New Testament was equally inspired, and that, therefore, the most conflicting stories and sayings must be harmonized in violence to reason and all historical probability. For example, one critic, impressed by the eschatological character of much of Jesus' preaching concerning the Kingdom of God as reported in the Evangelists, concludes that these parts of the gospels must be of later origin, since Jesus could not have at once held that the Kingdom was both present and immanent and future and transcendent. Another critic from the same premises concludes that Jesus was mistaken concerning the coming of the Kingdom. Why, I ask, could not a supreme religious genius, taking up the current eschatological notions of the Messianic Kingdom, have spiritualized them and taught that the Kingdom was at once present in its beginnings, immanent in its development, and future and transcendent in its completion?

Again, another critical school, beginning with the assumption that Jesus must have regarded himself simply as an ethical teacher, since he was nothing more and could not have been deceived about himself, goes the length of denying that he ever referred to himself as the Son of Man in a unique or individual sense or claimed to be the Messiah; and argues that wherever he used the term "Son

of Man" he meant simply "Man" in the generic sense. Such utterances as, "The Son of Man is Lord even of the Sabbath day" (Matt. 12:8), etc., can be made to square with this interpretation; but it is surely doing utter violence to such utterances as "The foxes have holes and the birds of the air have nests; but the Son of Man hath not where to lay his head" (Matt. 8:20) to say that here he means *man in general*. This is simply not the case, and Jesus could hardly have uttered such a nonsensical notion. Passage after passage, such as "The Son of Man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister," etc. (Matt. 20:28), and "The Son of Man goeth as it is written of him," etc. (Matt. 26:24), are struck out as later additions or glosses to his words, by critics of this type, in order to establish their presupposition, viz. that Jesus did not claim to be the Messiah, and hence never referred to himself in a unique sense as Son of Man or Son of God. The latest critic who is of this way of thinking<sup>1</sup> even argues with much ingenuity that, although we have no Aramaic record of Jesus' sayings, nor (he admits) any absolute proof that he might not have used some other Aramaic expression or even a Greek expression, nevertheless, since the expression in Aramaic, so far as we have literary remains of this language, is *bar nasha*, which means not *this* Son of Man but "Son of Man," i.e. man in the generic sense, therefore Jesus must have used

<sup>1</sup> N. Schmidt in *The Prophet of Nazareth*.

this phrase in this sense alone. Are we then to infer that one, admittedly a supreme religious genius, *could not* have used an old expression in a new sense or with deeper meaning? We have no Aramaic remains of Jesus' sayings, but we have biographies in Greek, and the problem is not primarily one of linguistic but of historical exegesis and synthesis, *i.e.* of the unbiased interpretation of the sayings and deeds of a great historical personality. If Jesus regarded himself as representative and leader of a new humanity and as a prophet of God, what difficulty is there in supposing that he used this term "Son of Man" to express at once a unique relation to humanity and a unique relation to God, and that sometimes he stressed the one and sometimes the other shade of meaning?

The spiritual history of man is preëminently the theatre of the unique and individual, and, when we have to do with an individual who transcends in insight and influence all other religious teachers and leaders, we do violence to the integrity of his personality and his genius and to the genuine historical spirit when we assume that he must have used words that evidently were fraught with new and ineffable meaning for himself in traditional senses rigidly fixed by grammatical exegesis. Nothing is definitely settled as to Jesus' use of the terms "Son of Man," "Son of God," and "Messiah," or as to what these terms meant to his unapproachable spirit, by determining what they mean in the Book



of Daniel or of Enoch or generally in Jewish apocalyptic literature, etc. In this way we learn with some degree of probability what these terms meant to his contemporaries, the Scribes and Pharisees, to his hearers, the common people, etc.; but what they meant to Jesus can be determined only by reference to the unity of his historical personality and the consistency of his teaching.<sup>1</sup>

I have entered into this brief discussion of matters not strictly germane to the central aim of the present work in order to emphasize and illustrate what I mean by saying that to understand Jesus' teaching, his work, and his personality, we must set to work without dogmatic bias and in the consciousness that here we have to do in a supreme degree with a personal creative force in the historical order; and, while we must not assume, without further consideration, that this personality is without parallel in the records of men, we must equally not assume that he can and must be levelled down to the standards of other masters in the same order, *i.e.* to the level of our estimate of other religious teachers, such as Moses, Mahomet, Buddha, or Lao-tsze. If the former attitude is the bias of the ultraconservative, the latter is just as surely the bias of the ultracritical who refuses from the outset to see in Jesus more than a somewhat exceptional man. From neither bias can one draw up a faithful picture of the personality of Jesus of Nazareth, or get a right conception of his teaching.

<sup>1</sup> See, further, Appendix, *Ethics and Eschatology*.



In framing this sketch of Jesus' ethical teaching I have drawn mainly on the synoptic gospels. But I have made use of the fourth gospel where it amplifies or supplements the teaching of the synoptics. The fourth gospel is, of course, primarily a theological work — and indeed the greatest theological work in the entire history of the Christian church. It presents an interpretation of the universal significance and cosmic position of the man Christ Jesus in terms supplied by Greek philosophy. But the theology of the fourth gospel is, nevertheless, based on history. It is the *historical Jesus* who is presented to us as the absolute embodiment of the Divine Reason or Logos. And, in dramatic form, we have presented in the fourth gospel historically trustworthy events, deeds, and sayings of Jesus not embodied in the other three gospels. Inasmuch as I am not writing a life of Christ, it does not fall within my plan to sift these actual events of Jesus' life and words as recorded in the fourth gospel from out their theological setting. The ultimate test of their historicity is their consistence with the career and utterances of the Master in the synoptics, and with the records of his influence supplied by the other New Testament writings considered in their actual continuity with Christian discipleship and the development of the church from then until the present time.

## CHAPTER II

### NATURE AND HUMAN NATURE

CIVILIZED man to-day stands at once closer to nature and more remote from her than stood the European of the Middle Ages. On the one hand he is less subject to nature, less the creature of his own impulses, less the sport of nature's forces and processes, less the prey of confused imaginings about nature, now than in the Middle Ages. He does not people the air with demons, the darkness with goblins, the waters with undines. He does not attribute every unusual occurrence to the action of a spirit, nor unexplained calamities to witchcraft.<sup>1</sup> He has become aware of the natural causal relationships in which all things in the world of experience stand to one another in a way in which even the Greeks, most clear-sighted of ancient peoples, were not.

The modern man has learned to subdue and control nature. He feels himself to be, by reason of his superior technique, her master. But, on the other hand, he is more clearly conscious of the many threads that bind him to the life of nature. Man has become

<sup>1</sup> In these respects, as in many others, contemporary Chinese civilization shows a striking resemblance to the European Middle Ages.

conscious of nature's order and systematic unity as the mediæval European was not. He has learned how close he is to the brute in his physical origins and how narrow is the gulf which separates the mind of the child, as of the savage, from mind in the higher animals. He regards it as a debatable question whether animals reason. He has learned that the struggle for existence and the selection of the strongest to survive holds sway in human society as well as in the animal kingdom. He finds that the evolution of human society is conditioned by its physical environment. He has learned to see in detail how intimate and fateful is the correlation between body and mind — between the processes of the central nervous system and the processes of thought and feeling. He has come to see bared the material roots and supports of human life, to see its superstructure of ideals, aspirations, and dreams, resting on an economic basis, and to realize what a tremendous part economic needs and struggles, arising out of bare brute needs and appetites, play in the total activity of human life. He finds that human nature and social customs depend in part on climate and food. And, above all, as the modern man looks out upon the natural world in its varied aspects, in the geologic and geographic remains of its past life and activities, on the varied and many-faced aspects of its present life in bloom and decay, in forest, field, and stream, in cloud and sunshine, he feels himself drawn close to nature through the interpretative

activity of his own mind. He feels a new sympathy and kinship with nature, born of an intelligent and ever enlarging insight into her constitution and processes.

Hence the modern man feels that in the conduct of life he must come to terms with nature. It is no longer possible as it was in the Middle Ages to ignore or deny her claims on him, no longer possible to set the realm of grace in flat opposition to the realm of nature. The rational mind, conscious of the tremendous social progress made through the study of nature and the light shed thereby on human nature itself, will not admit that a full and efficient life can any longer be lived in isolation from nature or that to deny absolutely her claims is to live a higher life.

The raw material and basis, at least, of the ethical life must be found in the natural, even if we do not admit that the Stoic formula, "Life according to nature," is still an adequate and all-comprehending ethical maxim. It must be the function of nature to provide for the development of the soul. The spiritual life must grow out of the natural. There can be, it would seem, no irreconcilable conflict between them. For our science and philosophy as well as the instinctive demands of our human nature insist on the unity and integrity of life. We cannot permanently rest in dualism. We cannot face the everlasting and indecisive conflict between two hostile powers. If nature cannot be harmonized

with spirit, then spirit has neither home nor basis of operation in this world of ours.

Such seems to be the outcome of the modern attitude toward nature. And yet, so far are nature and human nature from displaying to the scientific mind a final issue of blissful harmony, that a late distinguished leader in the science of nature<sup>1</sup> has insisted on the radical antagonism between the tendencies and drift of nature and the specifically moral and social aspects of human life. The natural cosmos revealed by science appears in its movement to be coldly and blindly indifferent, if not actually hostile, to moral endeavour, and the moral and social achievements of mankind seem to have been wrought out in the very teeth of this inhuman natural order. Evidently, things cannot remain at this pass. Either we must go forward to a solution of the antithesis or the moral endeavour of mankind must seem an irrational eruption in a non-moral universe.

What has Jesus to say on this point? He seems perhaps at first blush to countenance the indifference of the natural order to moral considerations. "For he maketh his sun to shine on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust" (Matt. 5:45). Superficially this seems in agreement with Huxley's view of the non-morality of the natural order. But, in reality, this saying of Jesus expresses a conception of nature as the mani-

<sup>1</sup> Thos. H. Huxley in *Evolution and Ethics*.

festation of a divine beneficence which transcends the standpoint of ordinary legal morality. The real universe is in Jesus' view, *super-moral*. It is because of the unstinted abundance with which God pours out his favours that the sun shines alike on good and evil and the rain descends alike on the just and the unjust. This bounty is the expression of an infinite love which far transcends the limits of a merely legal morality of requital. And so nature, in Jesus' conception, is the expression of a divine meaning and beneficent attitude toward man. The life of nature is truly for him the basis or foundation of the human life. The closeness of man to nature is expressed in the numerous analogies found between the facts and processes of nature and the ideal life in the Kingdom of God. "The kingdom is like a grain of mustard seed." "It is like leaven which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal till the whole was leavened" (St. Luke 13:18-21).

Nature is not for Jesus foreign to, much less is it hostile to, human nature. He takes no ascetic view of natural goods and enjoyments. The children of the bride-chamber rejoice while the bridegroom is with them. The catastrophes and ills that befall man in the natural course of events are not visitations of divine wrath. "Or those eighteen, upon whom the tower in Siloam fell, and slew them, think ye that they were sinners above all men that dwell in Jerusalem?" (Luke 13:4.) "Neither

hath this man sinned, nor his parents: but that the works of God should be made manifest in him" (St. John 9:3).

In the order of nature, man must meet evil as well as good, pain as well as pleasure; but, on the whole and from the standpoint of its divine source, nature is to be regarded as not hostile to and inharmonious with human life. It is true that there are profound disturbances of human life — grievous sickness, demoniacal possession, etc.<sup>1</sup> These Jesus does not try to explain away by metaphysical quibbles. He heals them, but he insists everywhere on the right spiritual attitude. He demands personal faith or trust as the indispensable antecedent to healing, thereby pointing to the spiritual end which the sufferings of man may be made to serve. This spiritual end is explicitly stated in such words as, "Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted" (St. Matt. 5:4). "Blessed be ye poor: for your's is the kingdom of God." "Blessed are ye that hunger now: for ye shall be filled" (Luke 6:20-21).

Throughout Jesus' teaching the idea of *life* plays the most prominent part. He sets forth the character of the spiritual life by analogy with the natural life. The natural life is the basis of the ethical and spiritual. The latter develops out of the former. In both alike, singleness or integrity of function and aim is the condition and goal of growth. "If there-

<sup>1</sup> Jesus accepted the popular conception of neurotic and mental disorders as due to demoniacal possession.

fore thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light" (Matt. 6:22).

But the growth of the spiritual man out of the natural is not a blind and placid process which goes on smoothly and without retardation. There are critical epochs in life. Man's natural birth is a critical process near the beginning of his earthly life; still more critical is his spiritual new birth—man's coming to himself, his awakening to full self-consciousness of himself and of his true destiny. This process of awakening is beautifully portrayed in the story of the prodigal son. The prodigal son was a conscious being with the power of thought when he set out on his career of self-indulgence. But he had not really found himself,—he had not turned his thoughts inwards,—he had not discovered the vanity and pain of a life without centre, without integrity and wholeness. He went forth to squander his substance and his vitality in a career of aimless and disjointed dissipation, ignorant of his true birthright as a rational and spiritual being.

There are three stages in the development of life. *First* is the unconscious or semiconscious life of the lower organisms—of the lilies of the field and the fowls of the air. This is a life regulated by blind instinct and impulse—a life in which consciousness is at best intermittent and without controlling power. There is here no *selfconsciousness*, no deliberative choices, no pursuit of conscious aims. *Second* is the life of selfconsciousness, to



which the human child awakens through intercourse with other selves, through imitation and social rivalry, through combat and coöperation with its fellows. This is the stage in which the distinctively human life begins. In it the individual becomes conscious of his several impulses and instincts, of their separate results, and aware of the conflict which these instincts engender with one another and of the individual with other individuals. Reason now arises to power as the ideal of an internal harmony in the self and the ideal of a social harmony with other selves. For the reasonable life in practical matters is a life of order and harmony. But reason is not yet effective to control impulse. It only becomes so in the third stage. *Third* is spiritual selfconsciousness — the control of natural powers and instincts, of natural impulse and desire, by the spiritual sense of a unitary life, of an immortal destiny realized in growing harmony with self and others. In this last stage alone does life become truly rational and get an abiding centre, a permanent controlling aim to be progressively realized. It is in this third stage that the man passes definitively from the natural to the spiritual life. It is in this stage that the spirit becomes lord of the flesh — that *nature* is transformed into and subordinated to *human nature*. And it is with this last phase, with the birth into the spiritual life and the growth of it in the soul, that Jesus is chiefly concerned.

Nature with him, then, is not hostile to spirit. The

spiritual life, the distinctively human life, must come to birth from the natural, and the latter will continue to supply the occasion for spiritual development. But with the critical epoch, the new birth, the inward or central principle of rational selfconsciousness begins to control and direct the nature life. The latter is now first illuminated as to its true meaning and function. We are now able to see that the conflicts and shortcomings of the natural life are themselves but natal conditions of spiritual life. It is in the rational control and guidance of a man's native or "natural" impulses and appetites that the spiritual life begins. This power of control is not to be gained without effort, and does not come at one blow. The *spirit* is the directive principle of human life — the rational conscience or heart of man out of which proceed the issues of life. But this rational spirit, too, like the lower life principle, exists at first only in germ. It too must grow, and that not haphazard as a wild flower grows, but by careful nurture. The spirit, too, must battle with the crude elements of existence, must toughen its fibre, and prove its strength in the struggle with a not wholly favourable environment. The glory of man is in the conscious life of mind, and the glory of mind is in its power of conscious choice and pursuit of ideals; and what most differentiates the growth of a spiritual manhood from all forms of merely natural growth is the active participation of a man's own *will* and *thought* in his own development.

It is in the growth of free intelligence and power of self-directing choice that man becomes at once the crown and interpretation of the entire evolution of life. The lower forms of life are plastic to their environments — they must adjust themselves to climate and food and other circumstances, or perish. And, even when the adjustment consists in an individual reaction to the environment, this is blindly performed. The actions of animals are guided chiefly by instinct, somewhat modified and enlarged, it is true, in the higher species by parental example and experience. But, let an entirely new situation arise, *i.e.* one not provided for by instinct or tradition, and the animal meets the situation, if at all, by happy accident. Man, on the other hand, does not only rationally and with foresight adjust himself to his physical environment. He *transforms* it. Furthermore, he creates for himself a wholly new environment — a spiritual atmosphere — by the formation of social institutions, by the formulation of ideal ends consciously sought after, by the embodiment of ideals in custom and opinion, in institution and law. Close as he is to outer nature, then, man is destined to be her master in the measure in which he is master of his own nature. For the power and influence of outer nature resides in its *rapport* or living contact with his own desires, interests, and aims.

In the teaching of Jesus in regard to man's relation to nature, this is precisely the standpoint taken.

Jesus steers a clear course between the ascetic negation of natural impulse and desire as wholly alien and hostile to the conscious spiritual life of man and the utter denial of any difference between man and the brute which would glorify mere impulse and desire, make the power of choice and the influence of reason illusory, and destroy all the painfully and slowly built up social institutions and ideals which make it possible for the child of civilization to start out on a new career of mental or spiritual growth precisely where the savage leaves off; *i.e.* to begin life by the appropriation of a rich inheritance of culture stored up in social tradition. The entire history of human civilization, yes, the very existence and progress of natural science, itself a creation of conscious reason, speaks against the gross misunderstanding of the process of evolution which would find a canon for human conduct in the glorification of the brute struggle for existence, and which would reverse the entire upward movement of humanity by reducing all intellectual and moral worth to the level of the crude beginnings of life. The existence of science as well as of civilization proclaims the mastery of mind over nature and the futility and danger of regarding the intelligence and conscience of man as the product and mechanical equivalent of mere blind forces of nature impelled from behind. Nature is lighted up, controlled, and interpreted by the human mind. There is a harmony between nature and human nature, but to this harmony the

elements and processes of nature contribute auxiliary instruments — the fundamental note is supplied by human nature. To live in accordance with our own nature we must transcend nature. Our lives must be *autonomous*, — self-legislative, — and this rational autonomy belongs to no merely natural being.

On the other hand, in the face of man's implication in the evolution of life, of the manifold strands of heritage and environmental influence which bind him with outer nature; yes, in view of the very harmony of his mind with the order of nature evidenced by the logic of evolution and the successful practical control of nature's processes by the human will, it has become forever impossible to maintain the negative and ascetic attitude of the mediævalist toward nature. That dualism which would separate man by the whole diameter of being from the outer world and find the realization of spirit in the negation of nature is an anachronism.

The true relation of spirit to nature's impulses and tendencies is affirmation and transformation by reason. The right attitude of man toward nature is that of intelligent control in the service of his own life — in the promotion of an increasing integrity and harmony of the rational conscious nature within him.

This is the attitude of Jesus toward nature. His teaching here is not only modern and of present utility, but permanent in value. But the efficacy

of this teaching rests on the assumption that in human nature there resides a unique power of choice and self-direction. And we must now consider Jesus' teaching on this point in relation to present-day problems and conceptions.

## CHAPTER III

### THE HEART OF MAN

PERHAPS in no period in the history of western thought has the nature and reality of the freedom of the human will been more in debate than in the present time. While the movement toward political and industrial freedom has progressed steadily, and while freedom in these relations of life now receives at least a wide theoretical recognition, the capacity of man for ultimate, self-originating choice and self-determining action is widely denied and, even where seemingly accepted in scientific circles, is often hedged in by so many qualifications that it is hardly distinguishable from the doctrine that absolute necessity rules in human actions.

Man on his physical side seems tied and bound with the chains of physical causation. His bodily life seems but a temporary collocation of elements that in themselves are parts in an unbroken and unrelenting process of change in the universe. The life that centres in an individual seems, from the standpoint of natural science, to be but a transient eddy or vortex in a universal stream of physical life. The movement of physical science is toward the reduc-

tion of man's physical life to the universal life in nature, and toward the reduction of this universal life to mechanical processes.

And, on the psychological side, the growing insight into the hereditary factors of mental constitution, and the recognition of the tremendous influence of social tradition and environment, seem to point us toward the ultimate possibility of explaining a man's conscious life and actions wholly in terms of inherited tendency and of the play of those social influences by which the incipient desires and impulses of the self are transformed into actual motives of action, through the force of established custom and opinion and by the power of example, deterrent or promotive.

I shall enter here into no detailed critique of the doctrine of physical or materialistic determinism. The grounds for rejecting the view that physical events determine mental processes with inevitable necessity I have fully given in another place.<sup>1</sup> Here I will only remark that the impossibility of explaining from purely physical premises how consciousness could arise at all, much less how knowledge could develop beyond the crudest and blindest sensations, and how ideals of conduct could arise and gain authority over brute impulse, is the insuperable obstacle in the way of the materialistic theory of things. Until advocates of materialistic necessitarianism have advanced at least one demonstrable step toward overcoming this

<sup>1</sup> *Personality and Reality* (in the press).



obstacle, we are entitled to accept the common consciousness that we are ourselves the sources of volitional or deliberate action, and to rule materialism out of court. The inward facts of attentive deliberation and choice, the consideration of alternative possibilities of action, the weighing of motives, the selection by the self of a desire, interest, or ideal for emphasis and affirmation in the face of strong conflicting desires, and, above all, *the feeling of obligation and power* to follow out a difficult or disagreeable duty — these are *prima facie* evidence that the psychical self is the author of its own actions. Moral action, *i.e.* the deliberate action of a conscious self, is self-determined action. Kant's moral argument for freedom has lost none of its force: "I ought, therefore I can."

But, now, what of the view which finds that, while rational and deliberate human choice is indeed psychical or internal in origin, the psychical process of choice or volition is always the determined resultant of a variety of blind biological tendencies and motives that are simply the inevitable outcome, in this particular individual, of countless streams of cravings and impulses that have originated in the process of natural evolution and that are here brought together for the moment under the focal light of a conscious self?

According to this view the consciousness of freedom, which a man has when he finally makes up his mind and lets his decision issue in overt act, is

simply the sense of relief from the painful tension caused by hesitation and vacillation in thought and impulse. The self is distressed by uncertainty, torn by conflicting motives. It feels the strain of competing tendencies and the suspense of thought that is not able to reach a conclusion. Voluntary decision means the victory of one tendency or impulse and the exclusion of all incompatible tendencies. This means the restoration of harmony or unity in feeling and the discharge of the accumulated energies of the whole system — muscular and psychical — in one definite channel. This discharge gives a highly pleasurable feeling of relief, and this feeling gives rise to the illusion that in some mysterious way the essential or real self, that sits as judge and ruler at the centre of conscious life, has somehow decided the whole case. But, in truth, according to the view we are describing, what really happens is that certain *psychical impulses*,<sup>1</sup> which make up the active side of the self, are working themselves out to a resultant like any other forces of nature. The ensuing decision and action is the outcome of what physicists call a “composition of forces.”

It is evident that the primary question at issue here is that of the *unity*, *integrity*, and *uniqueness* of the individual life or personality. If the central unity of the individual be inexplicable and inderivable from biological heredity, *i.e.* from inherited tendencies transmitted through the bodily organism, and from

<sup>1</sup> “Idea-forces” they are called by A. Fouillée, a French writer.

the influence of physical and social environment, then room is left for freedom as the affirmation in action of a spiritual selfhood.

In entering upon the consideration of the reasons in favour of the uniqueness of the self, I must briefly mention one consideration, the full force of which can be appreciated only by those who give some attention to the study of philosophy. *The primary principle on which all knowledge, both of the physical world and the psychical or mental life, depends is the conscious unity of the self in knowing.* If you or I have knowledge, whether of a physical object or event, a pain or idea in our own nature, or some mental state of another person, this means that you or I know that a certain idea or mental state that we have is *image, sign, or in some way representative of that fact.* To know is to *personally possess* or be aware of the relation of an idea to something else. In other words, "live" knowledge, "real" knowledge, in distinction from the mere possibilities of knowledge, *e.g.* printed books, material things, etc., — is possessed always by "me," "you," or some other "person." I cannot fully know anything without knowing that I am I. Hence, whatever outer source my knowledge may seem to come from, it is not knowledge unless it becomes in some way a part of my personal experience. *I, as knowing, am a single, unique consciousness.*

In a precisely similar way, "I" do not act with will or conscious volition, unless I have consciously

entertained, considered, adopted, and affirmed, as "mine," or as satisfying my "self," some impulse, appetite, or desire. As a thinking being no desire or impulse exists except as *for* "me," and "I" am not determined from without by motives, since no possible action or aim is an actual motive until I entertain and accept it. In short, my inherited and inborn impulses, tendencies, desires, are without power and meaning in my conscious life unless "I" as a conscious thinking being consider them as possible motives to action, as desirable aims for "me."

Voluntary action is meaningless without the reaction of a unique, thinking principle or "self" to whatever stimulus, impulse, or incitement may be present in consciousness. The whole realm of conscious and volitional activity loses the quality which distinguishes it from the blind unconscious movement of physical forces when the "self" is left out of account. But are not the character of thought and the controlling practical interests, opinions, and aims in the individual determined by social tradition and opinion? In answer to this question it is to be said, first of all, that the emphasis on social tradition and environment, on established custom, law, and opinion, on training in home and school, etc., as influential factors in determining the conduct and opinions of the individual, is often carried too far to-day. This emphasis on social environment often leads to a denial or neglect of the part which

individuals play in creating, transmitting, and amending social tradition, custom, and opinion. The individual is regarded as a purely passive thing, a wax tablet or a sheet of blank paper; in short, as not in any sense an *individual* or independent centre for psychical reaction to stimulus from without. Out of this inert, shapeless, featureless X, society, we are, in effect, told, shapes what is called an individual. The absurd conclusion follows that, since society is only another name for a group of interrelated individuals, every individual is created by the actions of other individuals equally as inert and featureless as himself. In other words, by adding together a number of zeros we get a positive quantity. Society can hardly hold together and develop on the economic principle of those islanders who are said to subsist by taking in one another's washing.

After all, the actual vitality and potency of social tradition and custom in matters of conduct, as in other spheres of social influence, depend on their active assimilation by individual minds and on their reëxpression through the reaction of relatively self-dependent individual wills. While the main lines of a given social tradition, in manners, speech, politics, morals, or religion, may be transmitted from generation to generation, yet the tradition is constantly undergoing modification by the reactions of a variety of individuals. Moral traditions change slowly, yet how great has been the influence of Socrates, Plato, the Stoics; of Moses and the He-

brew prophets; of St. Paul, St. Augustine, St. Francis, Savonarola, Luther, Carlyle, Ruskin; of Mohammed, Confucius, and Buddha? In the face of the notorious conservative and resistive power of religion in society what revolutions were wrought by Isaiah, Hosea, Amos, and Jeremiah; by Mohammed when he destroyed the fetichism and polytheism of his tribesmen and swept away the corrupt Christianity as well as the heathenism of surrounding peoples; by Luther, Calvin, and the English reformers, when they set going movements that broke the power and destroyed the unity of the mediæval church? How great the political influences of Pericles and Alexander, Julius Cæsar and Charlemagne, of Pitt the Elder and Napoleon the First, of Mazzini and Cavour, of Bismarck and Lincoln? How great and rapid the transformations wrought in industrial methods by great inventors and organizers? How great the influence of Shakespeare and Goethe in literature, of Raphael and Michelangelo in painting, of Beethoven and Wagner in music?

Now, every individual, however humble, when he exercises his power of reason and choice, when he comes to self-consciousness, becomes in some degree an independent centre of reaction to social tradition and established custom. He reacts to these influences in his own unique way. He may accept entirely the principles of action current in his social atmosphere; but, even if he be a conformist, he at least acts with conscious reason. He con-

sents and conforms as an individual, and, as such, contributes his own part to the on-going of the social life in which he moves. He may assume a more or less critical or reformatory attitude, and thus materially modify existing customs and opinions. He may, within the limits allowed by the powers that be, exercise a hostile and destructive influence on tradition, such as we find men doing in the realms of political, intellectual, and theological theories. Hume and Voltaire, for example, by their destructive criticisms, cleared the air for new constructive movements.

It is given to every man, who will enter into his spiritual birthright as an individual, to make his own reaction to the influences which surround him. In fine, it is a one-sided truth to say that the individual's freedom of action is limited by social tradition or custom, by the influence of the social atmosphere which he breathes. The other side of the truth is that social custom, like inborn natural impulse, is occasion, material and stimulus, for that free activity of the individual by which he enters into possession of his spiritual nature and so becomes truly a *person*.

Let us now turn to the influence of heredity on character. In the first place, there is even less evidence that acquired mental characteristics are directly transmitted from the parent organism than that acquired physical characteristics are. In the second place, while we find a frequent resemblance in mental traits between parents and children,

this can be explained simply as the persistency of original variations. Thirdly, every genius born of obscure parents, indeed every man of talent who is of commonplace origin, is an evidence of striking congenital variation. And the originality of a new individual is not destroyed, even if we are partially able to explain his new tendencies as the resultant of the combination of qualities from each parent. For the fact remains that these qualities are in him combined in a new and unique unity of psychical life and consciousness.

Over against the failure of the scientific determinist to account for the unity and uniqueness of the psychical individual, we are entitled to set the immediate and inexpugnable consciousness of the individual that in his attentive consideration of the problems of his life, in the acceptance or rejection of ideal standards, in short, in rational choice and deliberate action, he is a real and unitary centre of conscious action. The reality of human freedom in any vital sense depends on the real and persistent unity of the self. The consciousness of this origina-tive and self-determining unity is common to all men having the power of reason and the sense of moral obligation. It is only weakened and rendered doubtful by sophisticated reflections in the absence of urgent need for decision and action. When this urgent need arises the scientific determinist, too, acts as if he were the responsible author of his actions, and society treats him as if he were.



The consciousness of personal freedom and responsibility will still find its witness in the stress and crises of life, in moments when the various currents of our being meet in conflict, when we are conscious of making momentous decisions and when the wholly inner and spiritual, but no less undeniable, appeal and authority of ethical principles or ideals stand in unflinching opposition to the lures of appetite, self-interest, and creature ease. And this practical witness to freedom, in view of the part it plays when life runs high and we feel masters of ourselves, still has a right to be heard in the decision of the philosophical problem.

In truth, this immediate consciousness of free, self-originating activity is the intuition of a vital and dynamic *unity of life* in us. In his *deeds* man feels this dynamic unity, and therefore, when he reflects on these deeds, he refers them to himself and accepts the responsibility for them. Our sense of accountability for our actions is strong precisely in proportion to our immediate feeling of the vital and dynamic unity of our conscious selfhood.

It is a perfectly legitimate procedure for the psychologist to analyze the stream of human consciousness into various aspects—sensations and impulses, images and precepts, concepts and judgments, feeling-attitudes and strivings, emotions and sentiments, etc. We are not concerned here with the question what particular scientific analysis may be most adequate and workable. But it must

not be forgotten that the actual self antedates this analysis or dissection, and that these various psychological aspects are not independent elements by whose composition the unity of the psychic individual is constituted. If they are taken as actual independent elements, the actual self is resolved into a bundle of fictitious abstractions. But if they are regarded simply as artificially isolated features of a living and dynamic unity of selfhood, these aspects of consciousness, reached by psychological analysis, have not only a warrant in the scientific need for analysis, but they also contribute to our practical knowledge of the complex life of consciousness by giving us a more exact insight into its modes of behaviour. And, just as the actual living and functioning organism precedes and is the presupposition of anatomical dissection, so the reality of the various aspects of consciousness, *viz.* sensation, thought, and feeling, and the existence of a real and intelligible mutual relationship or reciprocal influence amongst them, presupposes the basic unity of the psychic life underlying and manifesting itself in them. The actual self, which realizes itself in manifold processes and activities, is deeper and more comprehensive than any single aspect or so-called element of consciousness. It is the continuous bearer of these varying aspects. Hence when our psychological and sociological analysis has done its work of splitting up the individual soul into a manifold of distinct aspects, tendencies, etc., and

has shown the dependence of this manifold on the influence of other psychic individuals as well as on social traditions; in order to get back the reality implied in all this analysis and genetic explanation, we must return to the dynamic *centre or unity of psychic life*, which is the presupposition alike of scientific analysis and of the actual development of selves in society.

It is in the *immediate feeling of this dynamic and continuing unity of rational life* that the root of the belief in the freedom of the will is to be found. Consequently the sense of freedom is strongest when life runs highest, when the individual feels the stirring of new depths within himself, when fresh possibilities of choice and action are welling into consciousness. In short, when man feels afresh the worth of life and the fundamental significance of its problems, he feels most his power of self-direction. Now it is precisely to this sense of inward freedom and worth that Jesus appeals. He rests his call to repentance, his rebukes for wrong-doing, his summons to face about and take up a new life, on the *sense of accountability and the power of making a fresh start*, which is what the common man understands by freedom. Furthermore, Jesus requires that the individual shall make the decision for himself, thoughtfully and carefully in full view of the alternatives before him. He will have no one decide lightly or blindly to follow him. He constantly demands a deliberate decision, puts

men to the test, and insists that they face the issues squarely. "Sell that thou hast and give to the poor" (Matt. 19: 21). "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross and follow me" (Matt. 16: 24, Mark 8: 34). "Think not that I am come to send peace on earth" (Matt. 10: 34). "Let the dead bury their dead" (Matt. 8: 22). "If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple" (Luke 14: 26). Everywhere we find the appeal directed to the fully conscious deliberate will. Jesus' very call to repentance is a challenge to freedom — to a fresh and conscious affirmation of ideals. He stirs up the depths of the soul. He arouses the latent spiritual energies.

All his teaching presupposes a fundamental and controlling unity of life in the individual, a single originative and governing principle of action which is the very root of the soul. This principle is the *heart of man*. "A good man out of the good treasure of his heart bringeth forth that which is good; and an evil man out of the evil treasure of his heart bringeth forth that which is evil; for of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaketh" (Luke 6: 45).

This appeal of Jesus to a man's inward sense of freedom does not imply that action may be performed without a sufficient motive or without reference to character. On the contrary it is the state of the heart

or inward disposition that determines the action. For "Where your treasure is, there will your heart be also" (Matt. 6: 21, Luke 12: 34). The strongest motive is the reaction of the heart or inward self to the incitements afforded by one's situation in life. Hence his constant insistence on the development of the right inward disposition — the cultivation of right thoughts and feelings. The entire Sermon on the Mount is a declaration of the fundamental and central importance for life and conduct of a right disposition. When a modern psychologist says that all ideas are motor, *i.e.* tend to issue in action and that to think is a moral action, he is giving generalized expression to what Jesus teaches in regard to the relation between the inward attitude of feeling and thought and the outward act. "Not that which goeth into the mouth defileth a man; but that which cometh out of the mouth, this defileth a man" (Matt. 15: 11). "For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts," etc. (Matt. 15: 19). "For a good man out of the good treasure of his heart bringeth forth good things; and an evil man out of the evil treasure of his heart bringeth forth that which is evil" (Luke 6: 45).

The final determining cause of action then is, according to Jesus, the inward disposition or heart. Here he is at one with a sound psychology. But this inward disposition or heart of man is not a fixed and finished product. A man's disposition, as this has been developed by previous deeds, will determine the motive which shall make strongest appeal to him

now. But this disposition in turn is the resultant of the self-determining activity of a living and developing unity of selfhood or personality. The true ethical or spiritual development of man is a movement from centre to periphery. Man is not free from instant to instant to act in opposition to his prevailing habits of thought and action. But the habitual channels of mental movement are the resultants of his own self-determining thoughts and choices. A man's past lives on in his present life just because it is *his own* past.

Freedom of choice, then, moves not only within the limits set by a man's heredity and circumstances, but, as well, within the limits set by his own self-initiated deeds in the past, which have moulded the plastic materials of his nature into a certain set of heart. Jesus recognizes fully these limits to alternatives in human action. "For this people's heart is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed; lest at any time they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and should understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them" (Matt. 13: 15).

Indeed, this determination of present action and feeling by past feeling and action is the condition of stability in goodness of character as well in evil habits. Without this fixation of mental tendency all the toil of right thinking and the effort of right action would have no lasting result and the moral

world would be a chaos. One could no more count on the effective goodness of the good man than on the destructive badness of the bad. Nevertheless, in spite of the power of evil habits and the lasting effects of sin, Jesus finds that the worst quality of all in human life is a spiritual insensibility and inertia produced by a mere routine pursuit of goodness according to form and prescription. Hence his constant condemnation of the respectable Pharisees and his preference for the humble and contrite publican and sinner. Why this reversal of accepted values on his part? Because he finds the true destiny of man in the constant upward striving toward a superhuman goal beyond the conventions and prescriptions of established society. He assumes in man the power, in spite of sin and evil habit, to break away from his past. He appeals to the inextinguishable possibility of a further ethical development. He grounds his call to repentance and a new life on the infinite spiritual opportunity and destiny which resides in the depths of every man's nature. His preference of the contrite sinner over the self-righteous Pharisee lies in the former's openness to spiritual influences. In the publican's sense of weakness and failure there dwells a responsiveness to Jesus' call to the pursuit of perfection. The very sense of sin and unworthiness is the first awakening of the inward vision to the infinite vistas of spiritual life.

Tied and bound though he be by the chains of

his past sins, in the humble-minded publican, measuring himself as nothing beside Divine Perfection, there is stirring the inward core of spiritual life. He is open to the appeal of holiness. He is stirred by the motive of love which gives him a new outlook and a new reverence for himself as he may be. He sees himself as the centre of new possibilities. Actual, *concrete* freedom then, as Jesus conceives it, is the power of hearkening to the call for spiritual progress, is the responsiveness to the demands of love and holiness, is the possibility of ever making a fresh start in the ethical or spiritual life. Freedom for him is not the abstract possibility of an alternative in every single case of action. It is the persistent possibility of a man's choosing his true destiny, of ever trying anew to be himself in the best sense. A man must react somehow to every influence, and concrete freedom means that a man may react in the long run to the better influences, that he may ultimately bring his true and spiritual self to expression in his character and deeds.

The heart of man for Jesus, then, is the central or controlling life-principle; *freedom* is the rule of this central principle both over the impulses which spring from the flesh and the merely legal morality of an existing respectability of convention.

Wherever the inward nature continues to grow in power and control of the mere brute facts of individual impulse and of social convention, *there* is freedom. There is a developing unity of the in-



ward self which is at the same time an enlargement of the spiritual beyond the merely given or natural selfhood. And the truth of Jesus' conception of the heart or central spiritual principle and of its freedom is witnessed by the common consciousness of civilized man. This truth is reflected in the inexpugnable conviction of the normal man that he *can* act for himself and that he *ought* to direct his own life in one channel rather than another. And the feeling of a unity in our inward lives, the fluctuating but ever growing sense, in the normal man, of the wholeness and integrity of the self, is the reflection in consciousness of this central principle. The feeling of unity in the human self is a conscious process which reaches its floodtide in our most significant *actions*. And the very deepest significance of our deeds is that they express and realize this inward unity of life.

There are two postulates on which the entire ethical or spiritual life of man rests and which underlie all the toil and thought by which man has moved upward in the course of civilization from the brute. Unless these postulates have a basis in reality, it is difficult to see what meaning the struggle of man toward a higher culture can have, and it is even more difficult to see what rational meaning or worth there can be in the individual life. These postulates are: 1. That man has the power of determining his own action and thought toward spiritual ends. 2. That the rational, free, and ethical

life of the individual is in contact or positive relation with a supreme spiritual life. The conscious realization and functioning of the spiritual possibilities indwelling in the heart of man is the growth in inward unity and power. And this growth cannot take place except by contact with a larger spiritual life which supplies the proper stimulus and atmosphere for the individual life. "I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly" (John 10:10). "For a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth" (Luke 12:15).

Freedom, then, is the having a conscious rational life. But this life in the individual depends on the touch of a cosmic life, and the very heart of man is the indestructible potentiality of the inward and personal spirit to grow in contact with a larger life. As men have gained control over nature and become masters of the external conditions of existence, they have ever turned their inquiry with passionate longing toward the nature, meaning, and destiny of the inward and conscious life. Never was this perhaps so true as in the present age, with its psychological drift in literature, art, science; with its poignant and sometimes even morbid introspectiveness, its acute self-consciousness of individuality. We are making rapid progress in psychological analysis of the individual and society and in the psychological interpretation of the past. But if this analysis shall live and bear fruit, it must be accompanied by

a living *synthesis* in experience and action. We must see life whole, and we can only do this if we have a comprehensive insight into its purpose and faith in its destiny.

Insight into the integral meaning and goal of life and direction how to reach that goal are precisely what Jesus offers. After these preliminary considerations of the general presuppositions of the ethical life, we are now ready more fully to consider his interpretation of life.

## CHAPTER IV

### THE CONDUCT OF THE INDIVIDUAL LIFE

FREEDOM and scope for the development and expression of the individual life is the unfailing index of a high civilization. Without room and opportunity for the free play of the individual, no society can be rich in great personalities. And all great achievements in art, literature, science, and practical life originate in creative personalities. In the ancient world the greatest number of creative personalities in art and science were produced amongst the Greeks. And, amongst the Greeks, it was Athens, with its democracy and its free movement of life, that gave to the world its greatest intellectual and æsthetic heritage.

In religion it was the theocratic commonwealth of Israel, with its acceptance of a God who had made a free covenant with the nation, based on principles of social justice, its well-ordered system for the administration of justice, and its provisions for the redemption of the debtor and the alien, that gave to the world the largest number of great ethical and religious personalities and leaders. In short, the Hebrew religion, established by Moses and deepened

by the prophets, was, in contrast to the nature-worship of surrounding peoples and of the original Hebrew tribes themselves, an *ethical religion*; since it was based on the moral choice, by the people, of a God whose supreme characteristic was that he had laid the foundations, and would maintain the principles, of righteous dealing between man and man. The moral struggle, the call to make a choice as to whom they will serve, that we find so frequently in the pages of the Old Testament, is the expression of the birth, through conflict with mere nature-worship, with its cruelties, oppression, and sensuality, of an ethical consciousness which defines the obligations of justice and mercy between man and man. It is true that the relation of Jehovah was conceived to be primarily toward the nation, but it is equally true that the moral basis of this relation brought a recognition of the rights and worth of the individual. In the rendering of allegiance to Jehovah as against Baal, Moloch, and Ashtaroth, mere unethical, nature-deities, and in the fulfilment of the moral obligations involved in this allegiance, the individual conscience necessarily came into play.<sup>1</sup>

Our recognition of the moral worth of the individual life is a joint heritage from Greece and Israel.

<sup>1</sup> In the prophet Ezekiel, the individual quality of right conduct becomes fully explicit. "The soul that sinneth, it shall die: the son shall not bear the iniquity of the father, neither shall the father bear the iniquity of the son. The righteousness of the righteous shall be upon him, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon him" (Ezekiel 18: 20).

And from the beginning of modern times up to the twentieth century, European civilization has steadily progressed toward a fuller recognition of freedom and scope for the individual, toward a deeper sense of the meaning of the personal life, and toward a better provision for the nurture and culture of the personal spirit. The movement of western civilization has been on the whole in the direction of a deeper self-consciousness and a fuller personal freedom.

This movement received a new impetus on the religious and ethical side from the Protestant reformers. When a time-honoured institution (*i.e.* the Mediæval Church) was tried at the bar of the personal conscience and found wanting, the worth and freedom of the individual in religion came to explicit expression. The same movement, on its intellectual side, began with the rebirth of classical learning, the rediscovery of nature, and the growth of an independent science untrammelled by the authority of Aristotle and of the Mediæval Schoolmen. The doubt of Descartes, who finds a sure and fixed point of departure for science only in his immediate personal consciousness as a reasoning being, burst the trammels of dogma, and the modern intellect steps forth free in its own prescriptive right to question and inquire from the facts of nature and the laws of reason. Henceforth, the way to universal truth lies only through the activity and coöperation of thought in the minds of individuals. The universality and objectivity of truth can only be established through

its witness in the common reason of the brotherhood of science. Henceforth the way to genuine virtue and the *highest good* lies through the originating activity and the consenting practical reason of the individual man. A universal moral quality and a common good can now be attained only through their witness in the common consciousness of the brotherhood of a rational humanity; not through obedience to the prescriptions of any absolute external authority.

*Authority* becomes now subsidiary and derivative. It must constantly be tested and revised by the expert individual, by the virtuoso in science and in conduct. Historical institutions can no longer claim the blind unquestioning allegiance of the individual will. They must commend themselves by their vitality and inherent reasonableness, by their power of and readiness for readjustment to the demands of spiritual progress in the individual.

And, since moral and ethical quality is now seen to be, as Buddha, Socrates, and Christ had already taught, an attitude of the inward disposition, a function of the heart or spirit of man, every inherited custom and historic institution, however hoary, must be tested at the bar of the ethical or practical reason in the soul of the individual. We learn that, if the worth and dignity of the will and reason of the individual person are violated, so far there is no real worth or dignity in the world. All genuine moral quality is an attribute of individual persons. Social

institutions and traditions have ethical significance only in so far as they are taken up into and minister to the inner life of the spiritual individual. All true ethical action must originate from within. All truly worthwhile movement must be from the centre of life to the periphery. All real spiritual life will irradiate from the heart of the individual outward into that nexus of social relations which binds individuals together. The growth in freedom and opportunity for the individual, which is the characteristic mark of modern times, is due to the recognition of the supreme worth of *inwardness* in life. It is the discovery that in the inward or spiritual consciousness and attitude on the part of the individual person there is alone to be found genuine ethical reality. But the free movement of this inward life requires that the individual shall not be trammelled and repressed by a mass of externally imposed laws, institutions, and authorities, by cut-and-dried formulas and systems. "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit" (John 3:8).

Nothing shows more emphatically the vital modernity of a poet, such as Browning, than his insistent emphasis on the supreme significance of the hidden movements in each individual life, his constant questioning of the ethical worth of conventionally right actions performed at the expense of some genuinely inward individual impulse, and his no less



constant assertion of the worth of unseen hidden motives and of actions that are perhaps from the point of view of the outer world insignificant, as the final criterion of a life's meaning.

I quote three passages at random illustrating these aspects of Browning's doctrine of the supremacy of inward and individual values.

"I'm queen myself at *bals-paré*,  
I've married a rich old lord,  
And you're dubbed knight and an R. A.

Each life's unfulfilled, you see;  
It hangs still, patchy and scrappy.  
We have not sighed deep, laughed free,  
Starved, feasted, despaired, — been happy

And nobody calls you a dunce,  
And people suppose me clever:  
This could have happened but once,  
And we missed it, lost it forever." — *Youth and Art*

"Stake your counter as boldly every whit,  
Venture as warily, use the same skill,  
Do your best, whether winning or losing it,

If you choose to play! — is my principle.  
Let a man contend to the uttermost  
For his life's set prize, be it what it will!

The counter our lovers staked was lost  
As surely as if it were lawful coin:  
And the sin I impute to each frustrate ghost

Is the unlit lamp and the ungirt loin,  
Though the end in view was a vice, I say.

You of the virtue (we issue join)

How strive you? *De te fabula!*"

— *The Statue and the Bust.*

"Not on the vulgar mass

Called 'work,' must sentence pass,

Things done, that took the eye and had the price;

O'er which, from level stand,

The low world laid its hand

Found straightway to its mind, could value in a trice.

But all, the world's coarse thumb

And finger failed to plumb,

So passed in making up the main account:

All instincts immature,

All purposes unsure,

That weighed not as his work, yet swelled the man's  
amount," etc. — *Rabbi Ben Ezra.*

## Compare

"All who have meant good work with their whole hearts, have done good work, although they may die before they have the time to sign it." — R. L. Stevenson, *Æs Triplex.*

In these words we find striking expression of the inward or spiritual character of all ethical values and of the supreme dignity and significance of the individual's life. We find clear utterance of the principle that the ethical or spiritual quality which alone gives worth to life must be felt and lived by a man *for himself*, *i.e.* consciously and deliberately.

And this sense of the supreme ethical worth of the individual is the inspiring and redeeming principle of the world-wide movement of democracy to-day.

This is the higher source and sanction of social reforms, of the present social unrest, and of all movements toward the socialization of the means and instruments of the common life. All the mighty streams of tendency that to-day are moving toward social betterment, whether blindly or well-directed, have their basic ethical principle in the demand that the individual man shall have full opportunity to develop his own life, to make the best of his own possibilities in action and feeling. These agitations and half-defined longings are symptoms of the quest for an inward unity and harmony of spiritual experience and of the insistent demand that the outer conditions of existence shall not hinder this quest.

We must not overlook, however, the confusion and the dangers incident to these movements of reform and progress. The individual's own nature and the permanent conditions of his true life remain undefined. Of what sort is the individual in whom resides supreme worth and dignity? What are his characteristics, and in the satisfaction of what desires does he come to his own true life? Not the satisfaction of every random impulse and not the gratification of every passing whim shall be the condition of the best life for the individual. And yet, the natural individuality of man seems to consist simply of a specific combination of blind congenital impulses, instincts, and desires. Each separate self comes to conscious being with his own peculiar mixture and intensity of biological impulses and interests. For

many men the goods of the palate possess stronger interest than poetry or art, for some even stronger interest than truth. By what criterion shall one determine the respective worth of these individual differences in practical taste?

And, again, there seems to be no real stability of life, no central and abiding unity in the natural individual, *i.e.* in the individual considered as a bundle of inborn impulses and appetites. He is blown about by every wind of impulse, and he is always the prey of the stronger individual or the tool of social custom and convention. If the good of the individual consisted simply in the unlimited satisfaction of his natural appetites, the attempt to reform society with a view to realizing this good would be foredoomed to failure. Since the natural appetites are themselves insatiable and know neither reason nor limit, we should have, with the removal of restraint and the weakening of social conventions, simply anarchy and chaos: "the war of all against all."

Furthermore, without the possession of a universal and abiding spiritual principle, the individual has no resource or resistive power against the encroachments and the tyranny of the mere machinery of social life. Without this spiritual centre he is condemned, so long as the existing social machinery maintains itself in a democratic society, to be the creature of the commonplace and the superficial, of mental inertia and conventional mediocrity. The

endeavour to realize better social conditions of life for the individual must defeat itself unless the individual be able to find a higher principle of action than mere social conformity or present utility. In the absence of this spiritual source of life, in default of any universal ethical and controlling power in his inner being, the soul of the individual must be crushed in the machinery of work and his life dried up in the routine of conformity, his spontaneity destroyed by the tyranny of the commonplace and the vulgar. We see these influences at work even now in the creation of a dead level of uniformity in dress, manners, bearing, opinions, etc., to which the individual is dragged down and made to conform. We see it at work in the endeavour to make the counting of heads, irrespective of what they contain, the test of wisdom, truth, and righteousness. The authority of the majority still claims to be the sole final authority in conduct and opinion. The test of goodness and truth becomes utility as this is measured by the desires and interests of the average man.

And, on the other hand, the reaction of the individual against this tyranny of the commonplace, vulgar, and crassly utilitarian standards of the average contemporary social environment is in danger of being the expression of mere caprice. Genuine spiritual individuality is confounded with mere eccentricity of will, with egoistic self-assertion and love of power.

The most artistic and influential expression of the individualistic revolt against the stupid and vulgar mediocrity of many tendencies in contemporary social life to-day is that of Nietzsche.<sup>1</sup> His "Overman" is the new and free individual who will be the absolute master of his own fate and so a law unto himself. He will subjugate his own sensuous desires, in order that he may completely control himself and so win control over the common herd. The great man of the future, instead of serving the multitude, will be served by them, and society will exist only that out of its dead level may arise the occasional superior individual who realizes the "will for power" (*Wille zur Macht*). He is the ruthless master of the crowd, despising the average man, rejecting the Christian precepts of sympathy and pity, because by these the weak and useless are preserved, and spurning every hitherto recognized principle of action which interferes with the assertion of his "will for power." He contemns time-honoured standards of action and runs tilt against the good as well as the evil in our conventional morality. Christian morals are regarded as a conspiracy of the many weak and cowardly to keep in subjection the few strong and brave souls. Nietzsche's "Overman" is the extreme drastic poetic representation of a blind, capricious revolt against the tyranny of the commonplace which rules

<sup>1</sup> See especially his *So Spake Zarathustra* and *Beyond the Good and Bad*.

in contemporary civilization. Here we have at least a vigorous assertion of the inner worth of the individual, but without any clear consciousness of the *universal spiritual ground* or source of such worth and, therefore, devoid of any positive interpretation or guidance for the individual life. Nietzsche's doctrine of the "Overman" ends in protest, irony, and capricious paradox. It fails in definiteness and coherence for want of a positive and universal ethical principle. It is an artistically expressed revolt without programme for the future or a definite picture of the Overman. It ends in negation. Nevertheless, his work, especially in *So Spake Zarathustra*, *Beyond the Good and Bad*, and *Genealogy of Morals*, has the great merit of calling attention to the serious dangers which threaten the inwardness and spontaneity of the individual life at the hands of the commonplace vulgar conventions of the mere brute majority, which threatens to rule in industrial democracy to-day, and to the absolute failure of mass and numbers without serious intelligence or noble ideals to supply any genuine inspiration or specific guidance or originating principle for spiritual life. In truth, democracy is at a very serious pass, since it threatens to become a mere struggle for sensuous and superficial goods. Thoroughness in thought and fidelity in deed are in danger of departing with thoroughness in work, through the haste to get something for nothing. It cannot be too frequently or emphatically

insisted upon that the problem of democracy is primarily a problem of conduct and character.

Many noble spirits to-day have turned from the platitudes of conventional morality and traditional religion to seek expression for spiritual life and satisfy their craving for an inward and spontaneous individual life in devotion to the formative arts. Art becomes for such men a source of ethical uplift. The individual finds in the devoted contemplation of beauty, or in the endeavour after its adequate expression in fresh forms, the means for the free utterance of his inward life and for the pursuit of harmony and unity in experience. In the presence of beauty, whether as lover or as artist, he finds himself delivered from the gross utilities of the market-place and from the banal platitudes of the multitude. He gets away from the dead level of things as they are and from the stifling atmosphere of a mere external routine of thought and conduct into a freer air, where things are not judged by their base uses as means to money getting and sensuous enjoyments, or men by their capacity to move like docile sheep in a flock driven by the staves of the majority vote, inspired by the commercial gospel of the greatest returns for the least expenditure, and guided by the moral conventions of a smug and Pharisaic Philistinism, for which external "success" in business and profession and social popularity are the highest standards of living.

And yet, art does not afford by itself alone a uni-



versal and abiding principle by which the individual life is delivered from sensuous caprice, practical materialism, and egoistic pleasure-seeking into a spiritual realm of experience. To exercise this liberating function, art must become the vehicle of *truth in life*; i.e. it must conform to fundamental, moral, and spiritual principles. Instead of pandering to the senses and to human vanity and ostentation, it must subdue its sensuous materials in stone and colour and sound into the embodiments of ideals. It must create forms that are true to the highest and most universal principles of living. And these principles are *ethical*. Art is the expression and ministrant of life, not its creator. Great art has always been the outcome of exalted emotions and exalted ideas. The Gothic cathedrals of Europe embody the religious aspirations and emotions of the Middle Ages. The painting of the early Renaissance expresses the union of Christianity and humanism in the new learning. The noblest music of the nineteenth century is the utterance of the aspirations of the human spirit quickened by the enlarged sense of the infinitude of nature and of the manifold and complex relations of the human soul to nature brought about by the discoveries of science. And great poetry, from Homer and Dante and Shakespeare to Goethe and Browning, has always been informed and moulded by the creative spirit of a people or an age assimilated and unified in the living genius of an individual.

Art, then, as well as what we commonly call *conduct*, requires for its development the guidance of *ideas* or *principles of life*. Without truth or fidelity to fundamental principles of experience and conduct, art becomes capricious and illusory, and the pleasure it yields becomes hollow and transient. Art can add a lasting grace to life and give genuine refreshment to the spirit of man only if it embody, in harmony with the truth of things, some phase of life and experience which has a permanent worth independent of the mere caprice or sensuous enjoyment of the moment. In other words, the function of art in life is to stir up noble emotion, and noble emotion depends for its purity and permanence on a contact of the individual soul with the ultimate principles of conduct and of being.

The freedom and worth of the inward life in the individual, then, can be realized only if his self-initiated actions and his private experiences have an objective and universal basis in an over-individual spiritual life. Freedom from convention may mean riot and license. Inwardness of life may be distorted into mere egoistic pleasure-seeking or anarchical caprice. True spiritual freedom must repose on obedience to a supreme spiritual principle. Ethical inwardness of life must be won in the service of and in communion with a universal ethical life. If human personality is to possess real worth, this must be won in the service of absolute values.

And Jesus offers this universal basis for the in-

dividual life. His appeal is throughout to the inward spirit as the governing principle of the individual. "Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not commit adultery: But I say unto you, that whoso looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart" (Matt. 5:27-28). "The light of the body is the eye: If therefore thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light" (Matt. 6:22). "Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God" (Matt. 5:8). In every case it is the inward principle of action that makes or un-makes the man.

Furthermore, Jesus treats reverently every individual soul. He sees the essential goodness in Zacchæus the despised publican. He commends the woman's deed of devotion in Bethany, understanding her motive. He condemns the Pharisee for laying heavy burdens on men's souls. He counsels the disciples not to be overanxious for the future, since they are of more value to God than many sparrows. And, in those words in which he lays down the eternal principle of ethical and religious freedom, he commands the disciples to give their souls and wills into the keeping of no external authority. "But be not ye called Rabbi; for one is your Master, even Christ; and all are ye brethren. And call no man your father upon the earth: for one is your Father which is in heaven" (Matt. 23:8, 9). He asserts the supremacy of human needs over con-

vention and institution. "The Son of Man is Lord also of the Sabbath" (Mark 2:28, etc.).

But Jesus grounds this freedom and infinite worth of the individual soul on its true basis in the universal and eternal. The disciples have one Father and one Master. They are to serve one another even as he has served them, "But he that is greatest among you shall be your servant" (Matt. 23:11). And the supreme and inviolable principle of the ethical life is an all-encompassing, all-forgiving love. "But I say unto you, love your enemies," etc. (Matt. 5:44). This command arises from the conviction of an inalienable worth in every human soul. Hate does violence to this worth, and therefore injures not only him against whom it is directed, but him from whom it proceeds.

Furthermore the unstinted care and beneficence of the disciple is not to be directed simply to external things. We are to care for the very souls or spirits of our fellows. "But whoso shall offend one of these little ones which believe in me, it were better for him that a mill-stone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea" (Matt. 18:6, Mark 9:42).

These are fundamental principles of the social life which we will consider in the following chapter. But the objective ethical principle or end for the individual is not a merely placid social life. Conduct is not exhausted in making others happy, in feeding and clothing men, and promoting social

harmony. Jesus, who counsels forgiveness of enemies, says: "Think not that I am come to send peace on earth. I came not to send peace, but a sword" (Matt. 10:34, and also Luke 12:51). He could denounce the Pharisees in no meek or hesitating words. He never counselled or sought a social peace and harmony won by the sacrifice of the higher insights of the individual. He never would have a living soul enslaved by convention, past or present, or sanction any custom that violated the worth of the individual life.

Jesus points beyond the actual social life, as well as beyond the merely natural or worldly life of the individual, to a *supreme spiritual end*. Human conduct is to be directed toward attaining this end. Human life is to be transformed into a higher spiritual life. The goal of ethical action is a new spiritual manhood. "Ye must be born again" (John 3:7). "That which is born of the Spirit is spirit" (John 3:6). "That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven" (Matt. 5:45). "Be ye therefore perfect even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect" (Matt. 5:48). There is, Jesus teaches, a supreme and eternal life of which the germ exists in man. And man's destiny is no less than to bring to fruition this spiritual life within himself. This spiritual life is that of the Kingdom of Heaven or Kingdom of God. This kingdom has been founded and men can enter it at any time, and are indeed constantly entering it now in this earthly

life. Jesus' idea of God as the source and sustainer of this spiritual life we shall consider later. But we can now outline the characteristic marks of this life in the human individual.

(1) A man begins to possess and grows into the true life only in so far as he meets the tasks and duties, the problems and opportunities, of everyday existence in the spirit of open-minded desire ever to do, to know, and to be, the better. The distinctively human life, the unceasing growth of heart and mind, which is man's prerogative and true destiny,<sup>1</sup> is possible only in so far as a man keeps his mind open and sensitive to all truth, his will humble and eager to embrace all good, his entire spirit free from narrow pride and smug self-satisfaction. When Jesus says, "Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven" (Matt. 18:3; compare also Mark 10:15, Luke 18:17, Luke 9:48, etc.), and "Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of God" (Luke 18:16), he does not mean that, in order to enter into this new realm of ever-growing and yet eternal life, one must have the innocence of a child in matters of conduct and morality, its ignorance in matters of common knowledge or science. No! the most charming and

<sup>1</sup> Compare, Browning—

"Finds progress man's distinctive mark alone.  
Not God's and not the beasts'; God is, they are.  
Man partly is and wholly hopes to be."

—*A Death in the Desert.*

beautiful thing about a child's mind is its eager and zestful openness to new influences and fresh ideas, its open-mindedness and honesty of purpose, its teachableness unhampered by any thought of personal profit, by fear of painful consequences, or dread of established conventions and opinions. The childlike spirit is that of genuineness. The entrance upon and the pursuit of the true life requires an open-minded, humble, reverent, and eager desire for fuller truth and higher righteousness. This childlike spirit of candour and love for truth belongs to the true saint, the scholar, the artist, the good citizen. In any and every relation and duty of life the man who lays his whole heart and intellect open to the leading of that which is truer, better, more beautiful, more worthy than that to which he or the social conventions of his time and place may have yet attained, is moving along the road to perfection. He has already entered into the life eternal of which Jesus speaks.

(2) It follows that a man's actions are really good only in so far as they are determined from *within* by motives which he has weighed, approved, and affirmed by his own conscious will. This great principle of the inward and personal origin of all truly human or voluntary action is insisted upon again and again by Jesus. "For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies" (Matt. 15:19; compare also, Mark 7:21, Luke 6:45,

Matt. 12:34, 35, etc.). Speaking to the Pharisees, he says: "Now do ye Pharisees make clean the outside of the cup and the platter; but your inward part is full of ravening and wickedness" (Luke 11:39); "for ye are like unto whited sepulchres, which indeed appear beautiful outward, but within are full of dead men's bones, and of all uncleanness," etc. (Matt. 23:27, etc.).

When Kant, the greatest moral philosopher of modern times, said, "There is nothing in the world, or even out of it, that can be called good without qualification, except a good will,"<sup>1</sup> he simply expressed in a formula this principle of the personal inwardness of all right human action which Jesus taught and illustrated by word and deed as no other ethical teacher among men has done.

(3) One must not act for praise or reward, but simply for the sake of the end and the joy of the working, the joy of communion and fellowship with the master-workman. This principle applies, whether the work be the active rendering of help to one's neighbours, the speaking of truth, prayer to God, or what not. "My Father worketh hitherto and I work" (John 5:17). In his model prayer, Jesus tells his disciples to ask in trust for their daily needs only, and, beyond this, to express their desire that God's kingdom of righteousness and love may come, their entire submission to and coöperation with the Supreme and Righteous will. "Thy king-

<sup>1</sup> Kant, *Metaphysic of Morals*, Section I.



dom come, thy will be done" (Matt. 6:10, Luke 11:2). Jesus does not say that service of the highest is without its reward. He teaches most emphatically that the universe is so ordered that the good will triumph and the evil be annihilated. He finds throughout the universe a law of compensation or retribution. He teaches that the spirits of men who have laboured faithfully, humbly, and gladly shall enter into the great reward.<sup>1</sup> But he insists that men's motives shall be pure and disinterested, that they shall labour without stint or envy, joyously and ungrudgingly, for the progress of righteousness, peace, and happiness among men.

In the great parable of the Labourers in the Vineyard,<sup>2</sup> under the guise of a like reward for all who have laboured, whether for a short or a long period, he calls attention, on the one hand, to the complication of circumstances and of personal conditions which prevent some men from awakening to a sense of their true destiny until the possibility of entering upon the right life is almost gone, while others have the great privilege of labouring in the realm of righteousness and peace from the very outset of life, having wasted no energies and lost no time in the pursuit of mere material goods and pleasures or in the indulgence of the evil passions of greed and hate; and, on the other hand, he teaches that the rewards of those who labour for the

<sup>1</sup> Compare Matt. 5:12, 10:41 ff.; Mark 10:29, 30; Luke 6:23 ff.; and many passages in John.

<sup>2</sup> Matt. 20:1-16.

highest, in the spirit of fidelity and love, are immeasurable. The principles of contract labour in the market-place of this world have no application to the motives and rewards of the spiritual life; *i.e.* to the life of service and of growth in the kingdom of the good.

For here the rewards are infinite and immeasurable. They can be appraised in terms of no earthly or monetary standard, since the reward is simply the unfolding of the motive of all true labour and service; viz. the joy of the working, the joy of growing in life by labour for truth and justice, for love and peace. The infinite reward is the expansion of this joy of honest and devoted work into a consciousness of communion and fellowship with the Highest. This principle has been well-expressed by Kipling:—

“And no one shall work for money, and no one shall work  
for fame,  
But each for the joy of the working, and each, in his  
separate star,  
Shall draw the Thing as he sees It for the God of Things  
as They Are.” — *The Seven Seas, L'Envoi.*

This is the spirit of true scholar, artist, and poet, no less than of what is technically called the devotee. Each in his several vocation is true labourer and hence true saint. And there is no worldly and conventional standard or instrument by which true service may be accurately measured or unfailingly detected.

‘There are flashes struck from midnight, there are fire-  
 flames noon days kindle,  
 Whereby piled-up honours perish, whereby swollen am-  
 bitions dwindle;  
 While just this or that poor impulse, which for once had  
 play unstifled  
 Seems the sole work of a lifetime that away the rest have  
 trifled.’ — Browning, *Cristina*.

The publican and harlot enter the kingdom before the respectable and highly connected Pharisee. Irreproachable reputation and high social standing may accompany spiritual death.

(4) An individual in whom this spiritual principle is dominant will not allow the inward integrity, freedom, and peace of his personality to be destroyed by any fear of external fortune or by social disapproval of those who live and judge by purely traditional and customary standards. He will not spend his energies in headlong pursuit of gain or pleasure or of the approval and commendation of society’s arbiters.

He will keep his poise at the centre of the inner life, which is preëminently a feeling for the real and true, inciting to activity a strong will. He will preserve at all hazards the spiritual freedom and integrity of thought which belongs to him as a rational personality. He will know, and live by the knowledge, that it shall profit a man nothing if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul. He will not fear them which have power to kill the body. He will not fear them that have power to

exclude a man from some established organization or institution, whether this be a so-called select social "set," a club, a church, or a trades union. He will not fear them that have power to rob a man of his just deserts in business or labour or even of his popularity or office. But he will fear them that have power to destroy the soul,<sup>1</sup> — the spirits that flourish on and live by sycophancy and lying and cheating, by base compromise and ignoble flattery; by an invertebrate conformity to that in business and politics, in social life and church, which has no excuse for existence except that it does exist and exerts its baleful and deadening influence to retard the progress of social justice, of mental independence, and of personal virtue. He will fear, above all, those spirits and tendencies, ever present in civilization, which have power to throw a man's life into the hell of a violated self-respect, a vanished love for truth, an individual freedom lost through cowardice, a soul deadened by mere conformity for the sake of ease and comfort, position, popularity, and wealth.

(5) A man who follows the principles of Jesus Christ will strive to make the best use of his own powers, both because of their inherent worth as attributes of a personal spirit, and because of their value in furthering the welfare of other men. He

<sup>1</sup> The disciples were warned to fear the spirit of compromise, of dishonest and disloyal regard for their own comfort, in the critical days when the Master faced the implacable hate of Jewish ecclesiastics.

will develop his own personal capacities to the utmost and ever use them in the service of justice, truth, and love. The necessity of constant alertness—of activity, of the fullest use of one's capacities and opportunities, is insisted upon again and again by Jesus, but more especially in the parables of the Unjust Steward<sup>1</sup> and of the Talents.<sup>2</sup> The man to whom one talent is given is deprived thereof because he has made no use of it.

(6) The man who accepts Jesus' principles of life will not judge other men's achievements or failures by the standards of his own life. He will be humbly sensible of the infinite complexity of human life, of the tangled threads of destiny in which man is enmeshed; threads interwoven of the complexity of external conditions in relation to the ever-varying strength and duration of the fundamental impulses of human nature from man to man. "Judge not, that ye be not judged" (Matt. 7:1). "Why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother's eye, but considerest not the beam that is in thine own eye?" (Matt. 7:3). "For unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall much be required" (Luke 12:48). "Many shall come from the east and the west, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven" (Matt. 8:11; compare Luke 13:25-30).

Such a man will strive not to forget in his attitude toward his fellows the Divine Love that forgives

<sup>1</sup> Luke 16:1-8.

<sup>2</sup> Matt. 25:15-30; Luke 19:12-26.

and embraces in its beneficence even the most errant and sinful son of man. He will endeavour to reproduce in his own heart that love that maketh its sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust (Matt. 5: 45).

(7) There will be and grow in such a man an integrity or wholeness of moral life, since he will ever seek and serve the *real*, and will ever be the enemy of pretence and sham. No firm and lasting integrity and harmony of living is possible except in the service of those *ideal values* of conscious living which in abstract terms are called *truth* in thought, *reality* in deed, *justice* in the mutual relations of men, *fellowship* or *love* and *friendship* in the common relationships; and which, in the concrete forms in which they may be embodied and experienced by the individual, constitute the real worth of living, the actual wealth and harmony of personal being.

(8) Ever looking for and striving to promote in others the same rational, free, and spiritual humanity that he seeks to develop in himself, such a man will affirm in every ethical deed the supreme authority and ultimate reality of this ideal humanity, which constantly grows in the world through the individual's choice of truth, of justice, of forgiveness, of practical love, of independence of soul and integrity of mind.

Without faith in the possibility of a new humanity, consisting in a living fellowship of free and rational persons united, not by external constraint, but by the bond of mutual reverence and regard, and each direct-

ing his actions without desire for worldly profit or applause, in order that by his deeds the higher manhood may find expression in his own life and in the lives of others, life is but a miserable thing, the ephemeral illumination by consciousness and thought of a lump of clay warmed by the instincts of an animal, which in turn are fanned into a consuming flame of desire, by the very power of thought. Thought which is employed only to enhance and to serve brute desire, thus degraded from its proper function breeds either despair and rage at the failure of life to satisfy itself or a hollow satiety.

Jesus teaches emphatically that this new humanity can come to birth in a man only if he has the faith to affirm it. Spiritual life begins in unstable equilibrium. The spirit of man hovers, in its critical moments, on the razor-edge of being which divides the realm of moral decay, of spiritual death and lost individuality, from the realm of moral progress and life eternal. The latter is the realm of those who manfully hold and reaffirm a great faith in the value of the spirit, and so find personality in the service of a spiritual humanity which is by their acts transformed from vision into reality, from ideal into fact. Very often the line which divides dishonest compromise from honesty in deed or utterance or thought, or self-indulgence from self-sacrifice, seems so wavering and faint that only in the privacy of a soul sternly alive to spiritual issues can this line be discerned and kept.

In the very act of affirming by deed his faith in

the new humanity, man recreates in himself, with new power and greater actuality, that new humanity. He is reborn into a realm which is not seen or handled by the outer senses, which cannot be weighed or measured, and which, hence, never *is* in a physical sense; but which becomes, for one who affirms and so experiences it, an ever living and growing actuality, at once the dynamic source and goal of conscious being.

Hence the severe tests that Jesus makes in order that men's wills may be awakened to the affirmation of this spiritual realm which they cannot apprehend or enter without such affirmation. When he finds that interest in family, wealth, or occupation obscures the recognition of the supreme importance of personal choice of the higher life, he lays down conditions that bring to a head the spiritual crisis in his hearers through which alone there can be born in them the full consciousness of their own spiritual individuality, of the sacredness and supreme worth of the soul. "Let the dead bury their dead" (Matt. 8:22). "Go and sell that thou hast, . . . and come and follow me" (Matt. 19:21, Mark 10:21). We must not extract *laws* or *rules* for every life from these utterances. They are directed toward specific cases. It is the *principle* and not a literal application of an occasional utterance that shines through them.<sup>1</sup> The same principle

<sup>1</sup> Remember that these words were addressed to his immediate disciples at the great turning-point in their Master's life. There



is taught in the parable of the Wedding Supper. The bidden guests are unready because they are absorbed in various side-issues. It is another aspect of the same principle that Jesus demands *faith*. His insistence upon faith as a prerequisite to being healed or otherwise helped, as well as to hearing aright and understanding his message, flows from the full consciousness, on his part, that, in the critical moments of moral and spiritual development, the direction that a man's life shall take and, indeed, his very power of further appreciation and understanding of spiritual principles, depend on the outgoing affirmation of *will* by which there is kindled in him the feeling of the supreme value of these intangible spiritual principles which he embraces; and of their transcendent authority in contrast with the brute facts of the physical world and with the inert conventions of

can be no compromise between him and the rulers of the Jewish church. He must suffer many things and be put to death. They, the disciples, must now make the great choice. Shall they elect persecution, distress of mind, suffering, perhaps death, in loyalty to the truth enshrined in the Master's person and life, or shall they think of wives and families, of friends and comfort, and be cowardly recreant to the light that has shone into their souls?

To every mature man, perhaps, comes sooner or later the necessity of the great choice. Shall the business man be honest and lose money or dishonest and make money? Shall the artisan do badly a piece of important work that cannot be seen? Shall statesman, scholar, or preacher face unpopularity or personal loss of position, power, or reward to stand by a principle? The hour surely strikes when we must forsake all and follow Him or lose our spiritual integrity.

worldly society with its traffickings, its rivalries and hatreds.

In the matter of ethical development in the individual there is, first, the nascent will to affirm that which is seen, dimly it may be, to be higher; then the deed; and, lastly, the clear insight or full experience of that moral harmony which bursts into flower only through the medium of antecedent choice and deed. In the moral life knowledge requires direct personal experience and experience requires the experimental proof of willing. By the nature of the case the unseen realm of spiritual values of ideal personal and social life can be known only by him who *wills* these values. "If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine" (John 7:17). This saying penetrates to the heart of the matter.

The new birth is the coming to personal and vital experience of the conviction of the inherent worth and the supreme reality and authority of a rational, free, self-governing humanity, which is present in germ and seeking actualization in every individual son of man; and which has its roots in a Divine and Transcendent Life. Hence this new experience of the possibilities of manhood which is a new birth, *i.e.* the birth into consciousness of one's conviction of a supremely worthful destiny as member of a transcendent order of life, while it involves a personal deed, likewise involves the feeling of a spiritual gift or grace which comes from beyond the individual's

life. In the critical deed of faith in the new humanity the individual's life is enlarged by the vision and contact of a Universal Life. His own deed brings the infinite reward of fellowship with a life that lifts his narrow and transient being into the atmosphere of the eternal.

In the world of western civilization to-day, freedom of *action* for the individual is generally recognized to be the indispensable condition for the development of personality. The modern man has gained the insight that a genuine morality is above all else a quality of the inner personal life, and that, where violence is done to the integrity of the individual will, there can be no real ethical life. But, on the other hand, is it not true that freedom of action without the willing service of universal principles of justice and truth degenerates into mere sensuous license and egoistic caprice? Can there be any deep inwardness, any abiding personal life, where thought and action are not directed beyond the mere externals of culture, — beyond the acquisition of power and wealth, of social renown and means of enjoyment, and where the soul is absorbed in the mere machinery of life? What real and lasting worth is there in the individual life which seeks to stay itself on external acquisitions or outward recognition, and which tries to satisfy itself merely with doing things that win popular approval, or that impress others with their bigness and glitter, or that kill time with pleasures that leave the spirit hungry, discon-

tented, and restless, without inward poise or unity of aim? Surely there is need to-day of *integrity* and *unity* in life and action, need of an abiding and directing *central principle of action*, need of the support and guidance of the imperfect and growing ethical and personal life by faith in and contact with a supreme spiritual life which the individual may make his own if he *will*. This central and abiding, unifying and sustaining, life-principle, Jesus offers in his teaching concerning the Kingdom of Heaven. Entrance into this kingdom is an inward attitude, an ethical experience, a point of view and of departure to be appropriated by personal deed. The message of Jesus to the individual is twofold, — a revelation of the possibility of inward unity, stability, independence, and peace in the midst of distracting and contradictory calls from the mere outer show of things in society and nature, in state and church, and a summons to the individual to make these spiritual realities his own by the personal deeds of a free spirit, able to win that higher life amidst the confusion and conflicts of the existing order of human society.

## CHAPTER V

### THE CONDUCT OF THE SOCIAL LIFE

IN the forefront of the problems of contemporary civilization stand those problems that are grouped together under the name of *social questions*. Such are, — the ever more insistent questions of the right relations of labour and capital, of the rights and wrongs of labor organizations, of the right of great producing and distributing combinations to control the price of commodities of common use and need, of the state's relation to labour union and trust, of the unemployed, of the herding of masses into insanitary and crowded dwellings, of the minimum hours of labour and the living wage, etc.; in short, the problems of the right distribution of opportunity and means of maintenance, of welfare and enjoyment for the average man. Now, modern science has taught us that the nature of the environment, both physical and social or psychical, is a tremendously important factor not only in its bearing on the health and welfare of the adult, but, still more, on the development of the new generation. Hence the question of providing healthier, cleaner, and morally better environments for the development of the citizens becomes one of surpassing importance to demo-

cratic society. The democratic state is forced, in the interest of its own welfare, to take account of these problems.

The science of biology has cast a striking light on the evolution of human society, by its emphasis on the brute struggle for existence, which goes on amongst all living beings and preëminently in a modern society of the industrial type. And biology and psychology have united to teach us the paramount importance of the environment in determining the efficiency of the individual's powers and weapons in this struggle and in determining to what extent the individual's demand for welfare and happiness shall be honoured by the actual conditions of existence.

Then, too, these demands of the individual for life and well-being have themselves increased with the general growth of enlightenment. It has become a truism that the increase in the number and intensity of *wants* or *desires* is a mark of civilization. The savage has few wants. The child of twentieth-century civilization is marked at once by a greater sensitiveness to environment, a keener capacity to enjoy and suffer, and a multiplication of psychical needs or desires — *i.e.* of needs that are such because they have been awakened through education and social contact and are keenly *felt*. Furthermore, the daily dissemination of information enables the poor labourer to learn what his rich fellow-citizens are doing and enjoying, how they are satisfying their needs, etc. And so his desires and

demands tend to multiply themselves and to breed unrest and discontent. His standard of living, of comfort, of recreation rises rapidly toward the plane of luxury. Out of all these complex factors of our civilization grows apace and with tremendous urgency the social problem — the problem of a new social order which shall bring a higher measure of justice, welfare, and peace to all.

Now the social problem concerns us here only in its *ethical* aspects. And we may recognize at once that mere increase of desires and of demands, such as we have just noted, has no necessary ethical quality and that there may be no question of fundamental justice involved in many of these demands in so far as they are demands for superfluities and injurious luxuries. In so far as civilization tends to the rapid multiplication of wants and desires, without the corresponding means for their satisfaction, civilization is unethical in tendency and is building on a basis both unreasonable and dangerously insecure. But, on the other hand, there must be a minimum of recreation and leisure as well as of bodily food, proper housing, and mental training which are essential to the welfare of the normal or average person. And the possession of these minima seems to be an ethical right which it is the preëminent obligation of society to make possible. This question leads us directly into the heart of the moral aspect of social problems.

Amongst the conditions of modern industrial life

that are directly unethical, *i.e.* that militate immediately against the mental and moral welfare of the individual, those conditions which interfere with the home and family life occupy a primary position. The herding together of all ages and both sexes in crowded tenements, the necessity of the mother's leaving her children in order to work for their bread, child labour, must all retard the growth of affections and activity in the proper channels as well as produce physical deterioration. The conditions of work amongst girls in shops and factories often wear them out physically or drive them toward temptations that always stand in their way.

Another factor in industrial life which makes against the highest welfare of the individual is the divorce between the worker and his work,—the absence of any bond of interest or delight between the worker and the routine labour of his vocation, and also of any bond of sympathy or common understanding and interest between employer and employed. The "cash nexus" becomes the chief social principle. This situation exists not only in manual labour, whether skilled or unskilled, but even where the work is preëminently what we call brainwork. The machinery of modern life is so vast and complicated that the individual worker is in danger of becoming a mere cog in a system; the human bond is ignored and men are treated as but parts or tools of the industrial system. Now, physical machinery and complex business organization are both inevitable



conditions of our industrial and commercial activity. And the only remedies for the above evil conditions are, on the one hand, the development of a mutual human interest and sympathy so far as possible; and, on the other hand, especially in the more exacting forms of occupation, a compensation for deadening routine in a moderate leisure and the opportunity for refined enjoyments.

In so far as the growth and activity of man, in mind as well as in body, is dependent on an environment which at least must not crush out, poison, or unduly repress his mental powers and higher feelings, thus far does the opportunity which the industrial situation gives an adult man or a growing child to have nourishing food, healthy surroundings, good air, and some means of recreation, constitute the *ethical aspect* of industrial activity. Furthermore, man is by nature *sòcial*. The healthy and harmonious development and functioning of the human personality is impossible without communion with other selves. In so far as by the industrial conditions of his life a man is cut off from family life, from social companionship and recreation of an honest, temperate, and refining character, and, in the years when he is plastic to external influences, is not in any way brought in contact with uplifting and enlightening personalities, thus far the conditions of his life are unethical.

. The above passages have been written to indicate briefly the ethical bearings of social problems, and

these may be summed up in a few words. A rightly organized human society is the normally indispensable condition for the realization of the highest individual life, and in the previous chapter we saw that all inherent worth centres finally in that which alone on earth has infinite worth,—the individual personality. This is the essential teaching of Jesus on the social question.

Hence the organization of society and its various institutions are not ends-in-themselves. They are means to the realization of the higher personal life in individuals. The principles which should determine our valuation of any existing social institutions and guide our efforts toward reform are these: 1. Every man has an essential dignity and worth which may indeed be hidden and potential but is none the less real. 2. The higher or ethical and spiritual life of man is social. Personality requires for its growth and healthy functioning communion with others, mutual intercourse, and service. The social institutions — family, community, church, and nation — are instruments or means of personal development and activity, and thence, so far, have an ethical character. The meaning and value of society is expressed in its individual members. The spiritual individual is at once, as potential spirit, the point of departure for social activity and reform and, as actual spirit, the point of return, the living centre or core of social life. The final touchstone of a civilization's value is the men it produces.

And these, I take it, are the principles of Jesus' social teaching. He lays down no political or economic programme. He does not even formulate a constitution for his own society. He institutes a free and plastic fellowship. He does not sketch out an ecclesiastical polity. The time was not propitious for these things. Jesus does not give the details for an ideal society such as Plato's *State* or More's *Utopia*. He recognized that the constitution and organization of societies, political, ethical, and ecclesiastical, must vary from time to time, must depend on changing circumstances, and that the organization of industry must be subject to constant mutations. "Heaven and earth shall pass away" (Matt. 24: 35, Mark 13: 31, Luke 21: 33). Therefore he refuses to entangle himself and his teaching in the judicial and political affairs of his own time. "Who made me a judge or a divider over you?" (Luke 12: 14.) "Render therefore unto Cæsar the things which are Cæsar's; and unto God the things which are God's" (Matt. 22: 21, etc.). The only social institution concerning which he gave any definite prescription was marriage, and it is not clear that he meant his utterances on this point to have the force of legislation. He seems rather to have simply announced and illustrated an ideal, which involved the recognition of the intrinsic worth of womanhood, and obedience to which would make marriage the union of two moral equals and an instrument for the growth of ethical personality. Compare Matt. 19: 4-11.

Now, if we consider the situation in which Jesus found himself, it will become clear why he refrained from all specific legislation and institutional organization, while laying the greatest stress on the social aspects of life and the spiritual significance of common ideals and institutions. Judæa was a province of Rome with autonomy in matters ecclesiastical. But the intensely theocratic nationalism of the stricter members of the Judaic church — the scribes and Pharisees — and the feeding of this religious nationalism on the traditions of the past, on the glories of the Davidic kingdom, and on the prophetic ideals of a new kingdom of righteousness and peace, with its centre in Jerusalem, with its intensely and thoroughly Jewish character, and with its Messianic head of Davidic lineage — all these things gave the Messianic ideals and hopes and longings of the leaders of Judaism in the time of Jesus an intensely and even fanatically political character. Religion, morals, and state were in their ideal inextricably bound up together, and all had a deeply Judaistic tinge. The Messianic kingdom was conceived in terms of a fanatical nationalism. Therefore, it became necessary for Jesus sharply to define and separate the social order or spiritual fellowship, which he sought to inaugurate, from this worldly ecclesiastical-political ideal of the representatives of orthodox Judaism. Hence his kingdom has little in common with the expected Messianic kingdom of scribes and Pharisees but the name. It was not long after

his own day that the advent of a supposed Messiah<sup>1</sup> produced a political revolt and led to conflict with the Roman authorities with great bloodshed. The political Messianic ideal went out in flame and blood. Jesus, therefore, was exceedingly careful not to jeopardize his own work and not to have his kingdom warped from its spiritual and ethical basis, confused with an ecclesiastical-political order, and thereby entangled with the politics of the Roman Empire.

He seems to have hoped, during the earlier period of his public career, that his ethical and spiritual conception of the kingdom would be taken up into and would leaven and transform the Jewish church. When he speaks of the immediate presence of the kingdom, of its leavening character, of its rapid growth, when he compares it to the grain of mustard seed which grows into a great tree, etc., he no doubt has in mind the expectation of his own nation and church, transformed by this new influence. And he looks forward to the time when the fanatical, worldly, and unspiritual conceptions of the kingdom as a political institution established by miraculous forces and of the Messianic King as a victorious war-lord shall be eliminated from it entirely.

The best evidence that he held this hope and purpose of transforming and elevating the current idea of the kingdom is revealed in the bitter and grow-

<sup>1</sup> Simon bar Kocheba, who conquered Jerusalem and about fifty towns, who had an army of 200,000 men, and was only put down by the Romans after a severe struggle in A.D. 135.

ing disappointment expressed in his own sayings: "A prophet is not without honour, save in his own country" (Matt. 13:57, etc.). "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how oft would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not" (Matt. 23:37). "Many shall come from the east and west," etc. (Matt. 8:11). "He hath blinded their eyes, and hardened their heart; that they should not see with their eyes, nor understand with their heart, and be converted, and I should heal them" (John 12:40; compare Matt. 13:15). The parable of the wedding feast applies here, too. His own people are bidden but are not ready, and so outsiders are admitted.

But, inevitable and sad though his complete break with the Judaism of scribes and Pharisees was, Jesus lays claim to the title of Messiah, as being the true ethical and spiritual representative of the ideal kingdom. He refutes the necessity of a Davidic or hereditary title. "If David then call him Lord, how is he his son?" (Matt. 22:45, Luke 20:44). In one of the last acts of his earthly career, the entry into Jerusalem—meek and lowly and riding on an ass as the symbol of the spiritual character of his leadership—Jesus yet allows himself to be hailed as Messiah.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> I cannot here enter at length into the discussion of the question whether Jesus claimed to be the long-expected Messiah of the

The Kingdom of Heaven, which was the general framework of his teaching, with the historical outgrowth therefrom of the vast developing and continuing organization called the Christian Church, are sufficient evidence that Jesus conceived and planned that his teaching should find organized embodiment in social institutions. The existence

Jews in any sense. It is clear, from the whole drift of his utterances and from his attitude toward the rulers and leaders in the Jewish church, that he utterly rejected the conception of a worldly and political Messiah who should expel the Romans and set up a triumphant kingdom as the Vice-gerent of God in Jerusalem. But it seems to me equally clear that, without throwing out so many passages from the synoptic gospels that, on similar principles of sifting, there will be little if anything left, one cannot avoid the conclusion that Jesus regarded himself as called and sent to transform and elevate the prevailing conception of his people as to the coming of the reign of righteousness upon earth, to purge it of its narrow national and legal features, and, by transforming it into a wholly ethical and universal notion, to make the Jewish framework the instrument of the new world-order. Jesus regarded his own immediate mission as primarily directed to his own people—to the nation whose language, tradition, and religious heritage he shared. He valued to the full the unique privileges of membership in the nation that had given birth to and handed down the teachings of Moses and the prophets. In the earlier period of his ministry he cherished the hope that his countrymen might accept his teaching and especially his conception of the new order or rule of divine righteousness. He concealed any thought he may have then had of himself as the true Messiah. But, after the bitter disappointment of his two rejections in Nazareth and the unbending opposition of scribes and Pharisees, together with the (probable) defection of many half-hearted followers, Jesus, withdrawing to northern Galilee in loneliness of spirit, finally determines to test the insight of his own immediate followers. At Cæsarea Philippi he puts the

of the church, even in its most woful aberrations, is continued testimony to the social effects of Jesus' teaching. And the *ideal or normative character* of that teaching has been shown again and again in its power to renovate and reform the earthly institution called after his name. It is not a part of my purpose to discuss at length the relation between

question, "Whom say ye that I am?" Simon Peter answers, "Thou art the Christ," and Jesus, accepting the designation, charges them not to reveal it (Matt. 16:13-20, Mark 8:27-36, Luke 9:18-21). Henceforward he prepares them for the inevitable crisis, when the hate of the Jewish rulers shall work its will. He warns them and tries to steel them to meet opposition, persecution, and personal danger. He constantly reminds them of what they must sacrifice, and, at the same time, assures them of the ultimate triumph of the new order and of the reward of eternal life thereon. There is no despair, not a moment's wavering on his part; but there now enters into his preaching a severer and sterner note. The final act in his revolutionary transformation of the accepted Messianic Ideal is his mode of entry into Jerusalem, coupled with his assumption of authority in the temple and his claims to a special insight into the nature of God. (Whether or not Jesus actually used the term "son of God" with reference to himself in a *unique sense*, it is certain that his whole teaching is pervaded by a quiet but unshakable confidence in his own perfect knowledge of the Father.) Thus the final crisis of his death was brought on. The whole development is so psychologically probable, the dramatic elements in the history are so harmonious, and the synoptic gospels agree so fully on all essential points that I cannot see good grounds for any other conclusion than that Jesus did regard himself as the true Messiah of his people, the one foretold by the prophets, and sent to enlarge and uplift the Messianic conception until under his hands it should serve for "the healing of the nations." That so radical a transformation of the current notion was, in effect, its abolition does not in the least affect this conclusion.



the Kingdom of Heaven as already founded ("in the midst of you") and as developing slowly by analogy with the growth of natural life, and the Kingdom of Heaven in its ultimate state of consummation. I will only say that the two aspects seem to me to be complementary rather than contradictory, and that it was natural that, in the later days of his life, Jesus, when his departure was imminent and his message seemed in danger of extinction, should emphasize the *final triumph* of his kingdom and lay stress on the consummation of his work.

In the earlier Galilean period of his ministry Jesus spoke chiefly the joyful and inspiring news of the immediate founding and rapid growth of the kingdom, spoke the tidings of the Father's love, of divine Sonship, of the joy of life eternal, etc. Later, as the conflict deepened and it became the settled conviction of the Master that he must die that his gospel might live and spread abroad amongst men, he emphasized the notion of the final consummation of the kingdom, of the triumph of the new order in spite of opposition and death. There is heard in his teaching a sterner and more strenuous note. Here, presumably, he made some use of the apocalyptic expressions current in his day. But it is neither possible nor necessary to determine here how far the words, attributed to him in the Evangelists on this point, are coloured by the later expectation of an immediate second coming or whether Jesus shared this expectation in the sense that it was held

by St. Paul, and apparently by the first apostles generally. It is sufficient to insist that the two notions of the kingdom, on the one hand as present and immanent ("in the midst of you"), as subject to a gradual growth (the parable of the leaven, the mustard seed, etc.), and, on the other hand, as future, transcendent, and perfected, are so far from being contradictory that they are necessary complements one of another. To accept the first wholly is to assume the second. A moral or spiritual process in the individual and the race that has no definite goal and that rests on no faith in an ultimate and perfect reality is surely without definite meaning.<sup>1</sup>

Even if one were to assume that Jesus did expect, as did the early apostles, a speedy second coming which has not been realized in the literal way in which it is depicted in the gospels, the imperishable ethical worth of that conception of a cosmic rule of righteousness, a Divine moral order, whose constituent elements are *persons* living in *fellowship*, is not in the least affected by that consideration.

What directly concern us here are the principles of social ethics that underlie the teachings. If Jesus deliberately founded a social order, called in the terminology of his own time and country the Kingdom of Heaven, how did he conceive the governing principles of that order? In beginning this consideration let it be noted that the ethical life, or

<sup>1</sup> See appendix, *Ethics and Eschatology*.

true life, Jesus makes absolutely identical and conterminous with the Kingdom of Heaven.<sup>1</sup>

We may summarize Jesus' principles of social life as follows:—

(1) Life in the new order is one of service. "But he that is greatest among you shall be your servant" (Matt. 23:11; 20:26; Mark 10:43-45). "For whosoever exalteth himself shall be abased: and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted" (Luke 14:11, Matt. 23:12, etc.). "The Son of Man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister" (Mark 10:45). In short, service rendered to one's fellow-members in the commonwealth of humanity is the measure of true greatness. In this respect the judgments of history are in the long run in agreement with the Master. Those who enjoy a worthy immortality in the memories of men, those whose names and deeds are gladly and thankfully recalled from age to age, are mankind's true benefactors—its prophets and poets, its thinkers and inventors, its reformers and statesmen; not its great egotists, its rapacious plunderers and bloody conquerors. No doubt mankind continues to dishonour and stone

<sup>1</sup> The term "heaven" is no proof that the kingdom had a purely other-worldly character. This term refers rather to the ethical character of the kingdom than to its space-relations. It is the realm of that which is *spiritually* exalted, the realm of an ethical humanity founded on God, not a realm existing in far-off space or to come into being in some far-distant time. Indeed, in current Jewish speech, "Heaven" meant "God" and "Kingdom" meant "rule," so that "Kingdom of Heaven" means in Jesus' mouth "the Rule of God" or "the Rule of the Father."

the prophets when alive, but, in the end, it does justice, however tardily.

The serious and general acceptance of Jesus' principle of service, as the highest privilege and reward of action, would do more to solve social problems than any other conceivable plan. It would purify politics, it would abolish commercial dishonesty and oppression, it would heal the breach between capital and labour. Let a man, whether political representative, judge, employer, or artisan, once fully recognize and accept the principle that to render honest and unstinting service to his fellows is to become a worthy person, and to enter into the life of enduring greatness; then there will be no thought on his part of personal profit at the expense of others, of disloyalty to his post, of adulterated goods, of inferior workmanship. This principle of true greatness is astonishingly simple to understand. It is vindicated by history, and our social progress is traceable chiefly to its influence. The men who have truly and permanently advanced the cause of human civilization have been imbued with the principle of service.

(2) Service is to be rendered according to need, not according to desert. "Call the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind" (Luke 14:13). "Give to every man that asketh of thee" (Luke 6:30. Compare Matt. 5:42; 19:21, etc.). Jesus does not inculcate a vague philanthropy, a diluted humanitarian sympathy that evaporates in an emotional mist. He

insists on a specific service to be rendered to definite and needy individuals. He would not have thought much of an enthusiasm for the conversion of the heathen, ten thousand miles away, that was blind or indifferent to the needs and feelings of the dwellers on the next street, and heedless of the terrible sufferings and evils of child labour, insanitary and overcrowded dwellings, the wholesale adulteration of foods, etc. And, on the other hand, the story of the good Samaritan told in response to the question, "Who is my neighbour?" (Luke 10:29, ff.) means, not simply that one is to deal with private cases that come to one's immediate notice. It means, too, that wherever there is a pressing need, there is an obligation created. The social principle of Jesus' ethics involves the obligation that one shall, in one's public as well as in one's private life, do one's part positively toward the removal of every hindrance in the way of the full development and fruition of every human person. He calls men, as responsible and rational persons, to labour for the upbuilding in every way possible of a higher type of humanity. Hence, while it is a mistaken view to identify Jesus' teaching with any specific and local scheme of social reform or socialistic programme, on the other hand, the acceptance of his principles involves the definite obligation to consider, with open and earnest mind, any plan for social betterment that may hold out a promise of curing social ills, and to contribute the labour and the thought of one's own personality

toward social progress. The Master knew the changing and uncertain character of industrial and political institutions. He knew that states and policies, the labour and industry of this world, are due to complex conditions that arise and alter in the evolution of human society. "The fashion of this world passeth away" (1 Cor. 7:31). These things are transitory. But the spiritual forces and activities on which depend the welfare of state and society are eternal. "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away" (Matt. 24:35). "My kingdom is not of this world" (John 18:36).

He will not entangle the good news he brings and the fellowship he institutes with any local and transitory scheme of things. The conditions of his work and the circumstances of his life prevented his participation in the activities of citizenship or the concerns of worldly culture. A member of a subject nation that was intensely and narrowly patriotic, and that longed for a heaven-sent deliverer, he must abstain from any utterance or step that would precipitate rebellion and armed conflict. He must take care, above all, that the new order which he instituted be not confused, to perish, with Jewish local and temporal concerns. The kingdom of the spirit must be kept clear alike of Jewish ecclesiasticism and Roman statecraft. As the inaugurator of a new spiritual cosmos or order of life amongst men, his work must be concentrated, intensive, simple, directed with single eye and will toward its absolute goal.

But the Master was no enemy to human culture, no ascetic or eremite. He loved nature and human kind, simple joys, human rejoicings at weddings, and the hospitality of friends. He cannot concern himself with science, art, or industry because his aim is directed toward the moral foundations of human character, without which these activities of culture are worthless and even harmful. In principle, he calls us to labour for these goods just in so far as they minister to fulness, peace, and joy in the inward life. There are very many things in modern life that were outside the scope of his work, but, if we get from him the true perspective, and learn to estimate things at their relative values, we shall find that his principle of service according to need ennobles art, humanizes industry, and gives a soul to science. And, with reference to these matters commonly called "social problems," while this principle gives us no cut-and-dried scheme, it urges and quickens us to render the service of our minds and characters to the work of social betterment. What Jesus contributes to social betterment is the ennoblement of personal character, the deepening of personal obligation, and the resolve to make every institution and organization subservient to the fellowship of free men.

The uplifting of society is the uplifting of its individual members. The solution of social problems is the development of noble personalities and the extension of their influence.

(3) The motive for rendering service is personal love; *i.e.* respect and regard for the worth of every human soul. "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself," etc. (Matt. 19:19 and 22:39, etc.).

Personal service is not to be limited to a return of favours rendered or to be given in the expectation of favours. It must know no limits of friendship or enmity, of social position, creed, or nationality. And why? Simply because all men, as having originated from the same Divine Father, have in them a spark of that personal nature which has infinite worth. Jesus' teaching of personal service and love follows directly from his doctrine as to the immeasurable value of the individual. If, however repugnant or indifferent to us a certain person may be, that person, too, has his individual share in the divinely originated spiritual nature of humanity, then we must treat that nature with reverence in him and render it willing service, otherwise we injure it in ourselves.

(4) The supreme evidence and result of the indwelling power of this motive of love is unstinted forgiveness, a good-will that conquers and banishes all anger and hate, and that is not confined and guided in its beneficence by the measurement of personal desert. Forgive "until seventy times seven" (Matt. 18:22). "Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which spitefully use you, and persecute you; that ye may be the children of your Father



which is in heaven" (Matt. 5:44, 45). The high destiny of man is nothing less than to seek a perfection which shall be the same in kind as the perfection of the Father-God, in whose image man is made.

Jesus regards God as indeed supreme in power, wisdom, and knowledge, but for him God's central and all-controlling attribute is Love, infinite and unwearying, that expresses itself toward man in beneficence unstinted and bestowed beyond all desert. "For he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust" (Matt. 5: 45). In these words, beautiful in their simplicity and depth, Jesus brings as witness to the Father's love the prodigal bounty of his creative power in nature, ever bestowing life and the gifts of warming sun and fertilizing rain that cause life to germinate and flourish anew. Man, in the heart of his imperfection and finitude, has a spark of the divine fire of love, and may, by kindling this into flame, become in truth a Son of the Immortal Love.

Rudolf Eucken rightly says <sup>1</sup> that the enunciation of this principle and its incarnation in a life are something absolutely new and without parallel in the earlier history of religious and ethical systems.

(5) The true ethical and spiritual life for the individual is truly social. The man who cherishes envy, ill-will, or hatred against his fellow injures

<sup>1</sup> *Wahrheitsgehalt der Religion*

his own life as well as that of his fellow, by perpetuating division and discord. The one-sidedness and poverty of the separate individual life is removed in the fellowship with the common life. The goal of the individual life should be union with the spirit of humanity. Through this gateway alone does one ascend to God. "Blessed are the merciful" (Matt. 5:7). "Blessed are the peacemakers" (Matt. 5:9). "First be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift" (Matt. 5:24). And the man, who, without active ill-will, is simply insensate to the lives of his fellows and indifferent to their existence and careers, is destroying his own life. He is shutting himself off from the atmosphere that his soul needs, — the atmosphere of the common spiritual life, which pervades the age and which lives and develops from age to age. Such an one is stopping up the very fountains of life. For every individual life is drawn from the common source, nurtured on the achievements of the race, fed and guided by the traditions of the great stream of humanity as it rolls down from the past ages of man's life. Every individual grows, is trained and stimulated ever anew by the incoming of the tide of the great life of humanity past, present, and to come, which sweeps away from his own life the stagnant eddies of ignorance and the impurities of an isolated self. The work of culture repeats itself and moves onward in the individual soul only as this opens to the experiences of humanity, and contributes its

labour to the further fulfilment of all human possibilities. He who isolates himself and sits indifferent in his own dark cave is treating his own soul, not as an organism or living spirit, functioning and growing in co-relation with other like organisms, but as a dead thing, an exclusive centre of inertia, an indivisible material monad.

From such considerations we may begin to appreciate Jesus' feeling of his intimate relation with his followers, the meaning of the Last Supper, and the deep and touching harmony of the symbolic act of washing the disciples' feet, as related in the fourth gospel, with the fundamental character of his work and teaching in regard to the larger and more abiding spiritual life that may be entered upon only by the way of ministry and sacrifice.

The death of Jesus thus becomes not only the inevitable consequence of his fidelity to his mission, not only his final witness to his own sincerity and single-mindedness, but the perfect type and symbol of the ethical principle enunciated in the words, "He that is greatest among you shall be your servant" (Matt. 23:11, Luke 22:26). "For even the Son of Man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many" (Mark 10:45).

The principle of life through death, of the growth of the spirit through sacrifice, which is expressed or implied in so many of Jesus' sayings, — *e.g.* "Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die it abid-

eth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit" (John 12:24), — receives its final and perfect illustration in the Master's own death. He lays down his life in fidelity to that life's work, to the gospel of the new order, and to the little band of men that have entered upon this order. More than this, he dies that men everywhere may the more clearly see and be drawn to that for which he had lived. Fully conscious of his unique power and knowledge, of a unique relation to the Father-God, Jesus voluntarily completes his work of ministration and forever embodies the gospel of service through the suffering and humiliation of a death on a cross with common malefactors. In this death he triumphs over opposition and hatred, and, in the Easter experience, the disciples receive triumphant assurance that the Master has indeed *died to live*. By his death the line is clearly drawn between his gospel and all prudential and utilitarian systems of worldly ethics as well as between his teachings and the attitude of scribe and Pharisee. Jesus' death is profoundly interpreted in the words of the Fourth Gospel, "I am the vine, ye are the branches" (John 15:5).

The necessity of his sacrifice is the consequence of the fact that he regards himself as the head of the human race, the leader or redeemer of humanity into the new order. This sacrifice embodies his solidarity with the race. It is *the Son of Man* that must suffer many things. At this point ethics passes into religion. Moral action is completed

and transcended in faith. The individual life becomes one with the perfect and universal life. The struggles and shortcomings of the individual will be overcome by union with the Christ-life. Discords are abolished from the heart, and the limits and weaknesses of isolated individuality are overcome in the peace that passeth understanding. This peace involves fellowship with man and God.

We reach the limits of our undertaking at this point where ethics passes into faith and mysticism. The final step in Jesus' social teaching, the goal of spiritual self-fulfilment through sacrifice, is mystical union with the universal and Eternal Life through the absolute service of the higher life in humanity. Mysticism, born of the desire for perfect union of the individual life with an absolute and universal life, meets us in some form in all higher religions and in most great philosophies. We find it in Plato and Plotinus; in Brahmanism and Buddhism; in St. Paul, Origen, St. Augustine, and Meister Eckart; in Spinoza, Fichte, Hegel, and Schopenhauer. What distinguishes the mysticism, in which Jesus' teaching issues, from all purely speculative types of mysticism, is that the way to the completion of life by union with the Universal Life, as Jesus presents it, is the practical, ethical way of loving service and willing sacrifice for the sake of other *persons*. It is not by a speculative stripping away of all definite attributes, not by withdrawal from the common duties of life, not by intellectual vision

or meditation or ecstatic swoon that one wins one's way to God. The way to God, a way that all alike, learned or unlearned, may travel, is the dedication of one's personal powers to the service of human personality in the common affairs of life. Man mounts to God through the particular and local and personal, through the dedication of individual will that breaks down the confines of self and opens the flood-gates of humanity. The way of Jesus Christ to God is a way that leads not by speculative and monastic retirement away from humanity, but through the personal and social life to God.

Hence the activities of civilization and the entire work of culture in industry, art, science, and social intercourse, in so far as these minister to the fulfilment of personalities in freedom, power, and harmony of life are at once expressions of the eternal order of life in humanity and the unceasing enrichment of that life. The universal life, the life of God in man, is at once expressed and more fully realized in the historical development of culture and in the improvement of the social order. The spiritual ground of individual existence is a life at once eternal and historical, at once universal and personal. The source and goal of the historical and social life of human personality is a Divine Life, never withdrawn from the struggle and the pathos of man's history. Man enters into this life not by the loss of individuality, but by its perfection through service in the social and historical order of human culture.

(6) There is an ethical law of compensation in the ordering and government of the universe, whereby those who have suffered here from poverty and disease, while the rich have enjoyed comfort and ease in absolute indifference to their fellows' suffering, shall be rewarded; while the callous indifference of the others shall be punished. See the parable of Lazarus and the rich man (Luke 16:25 ff.). The significance of this story seems to be often overlooked. Through its pictorial framework there gleams the doctrine of a moral order of the universe. The cosmic structure of things is not only rational but righteous. Love indeed rules supreme, but the peace of its fellowship is reared on the foundations of justice to the individual soul.

Jesus' teaching and deeds, then, inculcate the most absolute principle of social service and personal inter-communion. *And the fundamental principle of this teaching is the absolute worth of every human individual.* This is the ultimate *norm*, or criterion, by which all social institutions are to be measured, and the supreme principle which must guide the social activity of the individual. He regards *society* as a *communion of free and responsible persons*. It does not require much space, then, to state what the bearing of Jesus' ethical teaching is on social reform, and in what relations his ethical principles stand to the organized institutions of industrial and political society. If the be-all and end-all of society consist in the mere perfection of organized machinery, in

a cut-and-dried industrial and political system, then Jesus has no direct message to society. If man can become truly good and blessed, if the highest powers of humanity can be brought to fruition, by any system of social machinery; in other words, if the individual can be made good from without, by legislation and institutions, and if a perfect social machinery be possible, *i.e.* external institutions that will realize the absolutely perfect ethical life, then the ethical ideals of Jesus can be dispensed with. If virtuous character, without which no state can prosper, is made solely from without and not developed from within, then, with increase of political wisdom, we may dispense with Jesus' teaching. If, on the other hand, the inner will, or rational spirit, of the ethically responsible person must always transcend, in its absolute worth, its infinite moral capacity, and its autonomous responsibility, any system of social or political institutions, then Jesus supplies both motives and guiding principles for social activity and reform in industrial and political spheres as well as in family and in church. For Jesus' conception of the ideal humanity is that of a society of free, self-directing personalities, each of which possesses in himself and recognizes in others an individual life and character of infinite worth and dignity. Every member of this spiritual kingdom is at once an end-in-himself and finds his true life as a spiritual being in interaction and communion with his fellows. This spiritual society or commonwealth of persons,



usually called by Jesus "the Kingdom of Heaven," by its nature transcends all existing human institutions and organized societies. It can never find complete expression under the present conditions of human social life. Therefore, in respect to all actual organized forms of human society, it remains an ideal, and its ultimate reality and final authority depend on the existence and nature of God, the ultimate source of the conditions and possibilities of human life.

Nevertheless, although the Kingdom of Heaven remains in relation to actual human social experience an *ideal*, it has shown throughout history its power of interpenetrating and uplifting, of spiritualizing and refining, the institutions and organizations which spring up naturally out of the needs and impulses of man as a social being.

Notwithstanding its frequent aberrations, the Christian church has tried, from time to time, to realize a purer, juster, more humane type of society. And the state and the family have likewise shown the permeating and uplifting power of Jesus' ideal of humanity.

Furthermore, whenever the church has wandered far, as it has frequently done, from the ideal of Jesus, it has been corrected and turned again into the right paths, not by influence from without, but by a return to Jesus' own conception, and by submitting more loyally and open-mindedly to the influence of his personality. The "return to the historical Jesus"

is always the hopeful sign of reform and a renewed spiritual life.

Jesus' conception of the kingdom as a society of perfected spiritual individuals transcends the existing conditions of human organization. But without this <sup>need of</sup> conception of a transcendent society of persons, and without the conviction that the human individual in his social, intellectual, and æsthetic activities has his roots in the order of the cosmos, all efforts to establish a better and more permanent type of society must fail. For, without this conviction of the supreme worth of man's spiritual nature, the activities of social reform, the endeavour after better conditions of living, after a healthier and more cheerful environment, and an increase of opportunity for the individual, must all degenerate into a race for the mere increase of sensuous gratifications. Without this transcendent conception of the worth of life, the end or aim of life which will govern the multitude must be simply that of the increased satisfaction of sensuous desires, the multiplication and intensification of enjoyments, in food and raiment, in amusements, etc. Without a definite ideal of social justice, springing from a recognition of the inherent worth of every individual and the impassable limits of mutual respect for one another's persons, men will recognize no limits in their search for power and wealth, for enjoyment and gratification of the senses. For, if man neglects or denies the reality of his spiritual nature and capacities, the

lower or sensuous nature will cease to recognize any limits but those of power and opportunity.

On the other hand, the notion of society as the instrument for the perfecting of man's life on the spiritual side, *i.e.* for the perfecting of the life of enduring truth and beauty as well as of righteousness and social harmony, springs directly out of Jesus' notion of human destiny. The social ideal of universal justice, and the very conception of social institutions as opportunities for the realization of man's higher nature, are directly involved in Jesus' teaching as to the inherent worth of the human individual; and the social ideals of Christianity hence spring directly out of, and must be always evaluated in relation to, this notion of the transcendent aspect of the individual life. For the follower of Jesus no social institution is an end-in-itself. For him the value of any form of social organization is determined with reference to the ultimate conception of society as a spiritual and free communion of persons.

Furthermore, Jesus' teaching of mutual service as the highest form of discipleship, together with the supreme example of his own life and death, express his recognition of *sacrifice* or *service* as the great instrument of human redemption, or the uplifting of man from his lower and egoistic self to a higher and more universal life. Herein we find the fullest expression and embodiment of the principle of human solidarity, of the inescapable spiritual interdependence of men.

## CHAPTER VI

### THE IMPERFECTIONS OF LIFE

THE feeling of an infinite worth and destiny in the human spirit has grown stronger in modern times with the increase and spread of knowledge and through the triumphs of applied science which are in themselves witnesses to the power of the spirit of man. And, on the other hand, the new intellectual horizons which have been opened out by science — the extension of our astronomical world to infinity, the analyses of nature into its infinitesimal elements by physical and chemical methods, and the widening of the world's history by the biological doctrine of evolution to a process disappearing behind us in the mists of an infinite past and with its goal vanishing ahead of us in the endlessness of the future, — this revelation of an infinite about us and behind us, — an infinite complexity within the atoms as well as an infinite extent in the cosmos and an infinite duration through which rolls the unresting process of things — all this dizzies the thought of man and makes his own narrow and brief individual existence seem insignificant. But, out of the contrast of the briefness of his earthly life and the uncertainty of his bodily fortunes with the infinitely complex and

infinitely extended universe discovered by his own thought and mirrored therein, there emerges with greater insistence the demand for some other foundation for his spirit than that afforded by an ephemeral bodily existence tied down within the narrow limits of this spatial and material world.

Furthermore, while the sense of a certain infinite capacity of reach in the human soul has been clarified and deepened by the triumphant progress of the human mind in science and in its technical applications, this growing success of mind in mastering the physical world has neither quenched nor satisfied the deeper longings of the spirit.

Railways and telephones, electric lights and painless surgery, do not of themselves bring perfect happiness to the soul. The failure of scientific and technical progress of themselves to uplift and satisfy the hearts of men is most emphatically revealed in the social diseases, miseries, and unrest, whose growth seems to keep pace with the material progress of civilization. The intellectual mastery and control of nature which, it would seem, should increase the general comfort and well-being and raise the general level of the material conditions of living has not done so at all. We have learned that it is one thing to *produce* in abundance the instruments for the sustention and well-being of the physical man and quite another thing to *distribute* them equitably. Moreover, we have learned that the needs of man grow with his material progress, and those who have sought

enduring satisfaction in the enjoyment of wealth and the pursuit of pleasure have found their delights turn to hollowness and their desires to goads that urge them on to feverish pursuit only to mock them with the hollowness of sensuous gratifications.

In truth those whose lives are given up to the mere pursuit of physical enjoyment recognize in calm moments that they are not attaining enduring satisfaction for the soul. And those who, with higher aims, seek truth and goodness through the efforts of thought and will in science and right action, although their lives are the more noble and do attain enduring satisfactions, yet must recognize, just because they earnestly pursue noble objects, that the goal of perfect Truth and Holiness seems far beyond them, and inaccessible by their own unaided efforts. Hence it is not merely the hampering external conditions of life, — physical, economic, and social, — that seem to shut out our souls from the satisfaction of their deepest longings. It is rather something in the nature of the soul itself — a something which gives it power to feel and seek the *infinite* or *perfect* in truth and goodness and beauty, but does not bring the power to attain these ideals under the present conditions of its existence. The realization of its visions by the spirit of man seems hampered on the one hand by this “muddy vesture of decay” which it must inhabit; but, on the other hand, it seems to be an essential characteristic of the human spirit that its visions must always reach far beyond its

attainments, that its imagination must transcend the actual power of thought to grasp the truth, and its ethical ideals forever pass the limits of its will and power to realize goodness. In moments of freshness and strength of spirit, when aspiration is on the wing, man hears gladly the words, "Be ye perfect." But in moments of retrospection and review, when aspiration has run its course, whether of success or failure, and action is stilled and strength exhausted, man recognizes the truth of the words, "When ye shall have done all those things which are commanded you, say, We are unprofitable servants" (Luke 17:10).

There is a satisfaction of a good conscience, a satisfaction healthy and right. But this satisfaction exists along with and in contrast with a profound *dissatisfaction* with our achievements, with the sense of our weakness and failure in the face of the vision of perfection and of our aspiration thereafter. This aspect of the spiritual life can never be eliminated so long as a spark of the spirit remains in a man. Neither bodily comfort and pleasure nor the pursuit of science or art can quench this spark. Indeed the latter pursuits do tend to keep it alive.

This sense of our failure to achieve, of our recreancy to ideals, our blindness to visions, of the gap between deed and aspiration, was fully recognized by Jesus as an integral aspect of the spiritual life. See especially the story of the Pharisee and the publican, the contrast between "Lord, I thank thee that I am

not as other men are, or even as this publican," and "Lord, be merciful to me a sinner" (Luke 18 : 9-14).

This sense of failure and weakness, of deadness of heart and blindness of sight, is the consciousness of *sin*. It is the fashion to-day in some quarters to regard the consciousness of sin as a pathological product of Hebraism and Christianity. It is pointed out that the Greeks were devoid of it <sup>1</sup> and that many good men do not have it to-day. Reference is made to the spiritual torture and even insanity which the sense of the inescapable burden of sin has wrought in many souls, and no doubt the consciousness of sin can take and often has taken morbid and harmful shapes. But that is no good reason for seeking to eliminate it. And indeed it cannot be eliminated from any soul conscious of the possibilities of the spiritual life and of its own failure to realize them.

For the sense of sin or moral failure springs from the contrast between our actual deeds and states and the infinite Ideal of Holiness which is present to our vision. The Christian emphasis on the nature of sin is due to the presence in Christian thought and the actual presence in the personal life of the Christian disciple of the vision of an infinitely Holy God, the Alone-Good, as Jesus presents Him. It is because of the abiding presence in life of a God who is perfect Love as well as perfect Truth that the Christian must ever feel his unworthiness and his incapacity to attain the ideal, and here it is that the

<sup>1</sup> One surely finds it in Æschylus, Sophocles, and Plato!



ethical attitude passes over into the specifically religious. Although we fall short, God is with us. The Ideal is not a cold and lonely summit of goodness forever inaccessible to human effort. If we cannot now realize it by our own deeds, yet, as life and love, it comes to us and dwells with us and heals and inspires us by its presence.

The publican went down to his house justified, — justified because in utter humility and reverence before God's perfection he went home with the vision and worship of the perfect in his heart. For in truth the highest quality in human life is that spontaneous love and worship of Perfect Goodness of which the reverse side is the disparagement of one's self and the sense of failure and sin. To be still able to love and adore that Perfect Goodness in which there is no struggle and no gap between vision and achievement, between desire and deed, this it is that *justifies* or makes a man right in the midst of his own weakness and sin.

For the heartfelt sense of sin and weakness arises from the midst of the very worship of Divine Perfection or, as we might say, it is out of the very midst of the vision and love of God's goodness that there springs the confession of our own weakness. And the worshipful love of the Perfect becomes the spring and source of fresh strength for action. Out of our very sense of moral weakness there rises a fresh success, out of the very midst of our consciousness of failure and of impotence there rises the joy and

peace of the presence of the perfect in life. To love the perfect is to feel and confess our own imperfections. But to love the perfect is to possess the perfect and to be healed and strengthened by it. Hence to worship a Divine Holiness is at once to confess our own sinfulness and to possess a goodness that we did not achieve except as we have adored it. To love God because He is the All-Perfect One is to commune with Him through that love which lifts us above the actual or possible attainments of our *wills* and makes us actually one with Him.

Yes, the soul of man is infinite in its demands! No deluge of pleasures and riches and earthly honours will satisfy these demands. The soul of man is infinite in aspiration and no accumulation of scientific facts and laws, no outwardly successful round of conformity to moral laws, will satisfy that aspiration. The spirit must pass beyond fact and law discovered and duty fulfilled to love and adoration of a *living Perfection*, of perfect love revealed in a life. Here it is that science and morals (in the ordinary sense of conformity to the formulated laws of right) reach their term. Here it is that the spirit of man finds forgiveness and rest, realization of aspiration, the direct possession of the Perfect as Truth and Love in the vision of an Infinite Person, *i.e.* of a life which is the unity of perfect goodness and perfect wisdom.

And this perfect life, the infinite Wisdom and Love whom the human spirit seeks, is the background of Jesus' whole life and teaching.

But there is another aspect of the problem of life and its present imperfections. The vision of the perfect is not always with the soul, and when it comes, it stirs us anew and strengthens us to further endeavour in the ethical life. This vision inspires men to attain a greater self-control, a better direction of the lower nature by the higher, and a fuller harmony between right aspiration and the prevailing habits of action. The vision of Divine Perfection points and stirs men on in the work of making goodness a *second nature*, i.e. a habit of their being. In other words, their vision stimulates to moral progress which men do indeed achieve though slowly. And what is the end or goal thereof? Surely at least an ever closer approximation to a state in which our feeling and our action shall be in perfect unison with the goodness and love embodied in the vision of God, in which the spirit of man shall live no longer in discordance but in harmony with his fellows, no longer having fitful gleams of God's perfection but seeing Him more nearly as He is.

And this ethical or spiritual progress implies the immortality of man's spirit. Not only must the spirit continue to exist in order that its ethical progress may go on, but it must exist eternally so that no spiritual achievement may be lost. For there is no meaning in a goodness, perfection, love, which is not an attribute or quality of a *living person* or spirit. Unless my own moral individuality is conserved, whatever moral quality I attain and possess, whatever

reverence for truth and justice, whatever life of love and fellowship, those, it would seem, are surely lost to the universe. For we cannot, in the ethical life, regard past deeds and achievements as having present being apart from the spirit or will from which they issued and whose nature they at once expressed and further strengthened and developed, or, *at least*, apart from their continuing influence on living spirits *now* inspired by contemplation of them.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> George Eliot's noble lines

"O may I join the choir invisible  
Of those immortal dead," etc.

are expressive of a genuinely inspiring and fundamental faith in immortality. No one who has earnestly gone to the spiritual history of the race for guidance and inspiration at the hands of its great spiritual leaders can fail to appreciate the profound value and power of the continuing influence by which, as each successive generation of men runs the race that is set before it, its members, facing tasks that are ever old and yet ever new, are brought farther and farther forward on the path of spiritual achievement and into the ways of peace and insight, by communion with those great ones that have gone before and that, from the dawn of the spiritual life, have overcome passions, subdued mysteries, and banished fears, so that their successors might live more cleanly, strongly, gladly, and peacefully. But does not the inspiring quality of this faith in the immortality of the good in human history and in the racial communion of saints presuppose a larger and more primal faith, viz. the faith that the race of man in its spiritual endeavours, achievements, insights, and joys, is *one* because it eternally rests on a supreme cosmic spiritual life? Is not faith in the moral continuity and spiritual solidarity of the race, regarded as immortal, grounded on the latent faith in one Universal and Eternal Spiritual Life that is ever manifesting and realizing itself in the spiritual ongoing of the race? And does not this social persistence of the spirit involve a persistent element in the individual?

The feeling of the *infinite worth* and *destiny* of the human spirit in the recognition of its vocation to realize and be a free and rational personality, living in relations of love and communion with other persons, involves as a necessary postulate the immortality of the ethical will in the individual. The doctrine of immortality is hence a *corollary*, not a premise of the ethical life. And in Jesus' teaching it is a consequent, not an antecedent, of the spiritual attitude which he inculcates and to which his life was the witness. It is because the soul has supreme *value* that it must be immortal. "Ye are of more value than many sparrows" (Matt. 10:31). "If a son shall ask bread of any of you that is a father, will he give him a stone?" etc. (Luke 11:11).

It is because the personal life of love is the life of *supreme worth* for man that it is held to be eternal. Certainly in respect to goodness and the immortality of the good will the judgments of the Christian or disciple of Jesus, are, as has often been said, *judgments of worth or value* in distinction from *judgments of bare unspiritual fact*. That there is a lake seen through my window as I write, is a judgment of mere *fact*, which at the present moment has no bearing on or relation to my own aims and ideals as a

Spirit is person and person is spirit. Every separate individual who enters into his spiritual heritage by meeting his moral obligations and facing the issues of life must be an integral element in the immortal life of the race that is ever conserved and yet ever growing, and his being must be grounded on that universal and eternal life which manifests and fulfils itself in the race.

moral being or spiritual person. On the other hand, the fact that I have certain strong passions of love, ambition, intellectual interests, etc., involves judgments of fact that obviously do bear strongly on my moral nature. And if, for example, it were established as a fact, verifiable by any reasoning being, that the mind and will of man is a merely transient by-product of his bodily organism and that, consequently, there is nothing in the spirit of man that could possibly survive the dissolution of his present body, personal immortality or the conservation of spirit in any sense would be a delusion, and judgments of value, viz. as to the enduring worth and meaning of the life of righteousness and love, of justice and peace, would be without adequate foundation in the nature of the universe. The entire moral and spiritual life would be in such case a homeless waif in the cosmos.

In the absence of any such conflicting proof of fact, our immediate convictions as to the supreme worth and meaning of justice, honesty, integrity, love, and peace, and as to the supreme worth of the living personality, of which these abstract spiritual qualities are expressions, lead us to the judgment that this spiritual life of personality must be enduring, that it must be founded on the nature of things. Such is the meaning of saying that faith in immortality rests on a judgment of value. Indeed this faith is the instinctive expression of man's ultimate or most final judgment of value, *i.e.* of the supreme meaning

of that principle within himself which because it seeks justice, truth, and love, he feels with an immediate conviction to be the highest reality in the world.

Now, on the other hand, the establishment as a verifiable fact, if such were possible, of the continued existence of conscious beings after death through their communication with the living, need have no moral value, no spiritual significance whatsoever. If this continued existence were a ghostly or even sensuous state involving no further scope for moral achievement, for spiritual insight, no efflorescence in the wider, richer realms of truth, beauty, and love, of that life which at best seems to have only its crude beginnings now on earth, then the fact of continued existence would be devoid of spiritual significance. Instead of comforting and inspiring the best spirits with the resolve "to speed on, fight on, fare ever," it would chill them with despair at the triviality and insignificance, yes! the mocking meaninglessness, of the issues of the human life.

I do not say that psychical research, so-called, may not sometime have light to throw on the spiritual meaning of existence. I wish only to insist that belief in some kind of ghostly or sentient continuance of existence, and in an immortal life radiant with fuller spiritual insight and quickened with larger scope for achievement and love, are separated by the whole diameter of being.

The realm into which Christ introduces us and

in which, under his leadership, we grow is that of the supreme ethical and spiritual values. It is the realm of social justice, of intellectual integrity, of peace and love and joy "in widest commonalty spread." This is *not* a realm of brute fact and physical existence. The world of spiritual values and experiences is of another order than the world of body, and no facts in regard to the latter order are conclusive in regard to the possibilities of the former order.

It can only be because of our immediate experiences or judgments of the supreme *worth* of the life of spiritual personality that we have a vital faith in the immortality of the individual spirit. It would require a treatise on philosophy fully to demonstrate the dependence of truth in natural science and in all departments of knowledge, as well as the dependence of the moral and religious life, on the faith in the supreme worth and reality of the personal life or will. It must suffice here to call attention to the principle that without the moving power of this conviction of the inherent value of a rational spirit, the search for and possession of truth as well as of goodness and beauty would be unmeaning. All these inherently worthwhile possessions are creations of a spirit which seeks to satisfy its demands for fuller being through them.

In truth all our fundamental attitudes of thought and action are judgments of *value* or *worth*, *i.e.* expressions of what shall prevail for us — falsehood



or truth; hate or love; discord or harmony; God or evil. These judgments are the deepest expressions of the inward personality; and the authority of a person, in this case the authority of the personality of Jesus for us, is the authority of certain judgments of worth. If we accept his judgments of worth, we should accept his person as normative for our lives, and this personal life under the leadership of Jesus will have for its necessary consequence the faith in the eternal quality of the life of the spirit in the individual.

Although Jesus himself refrains from saying anything definite in regard to the precise character and conditions of the life after death except in the single instance where he characterizes it in negative terms, viz. "they neither marry nor are given in marriage," the faith in individual immortality and the resurrection from the dead into a life eternal and blessed constitute an integral part of his teaching. His sayings in regard to the perfect coming of the kingdom, and in regard to future judgment and reward, always involve this faith. See especially Matt. 5: 29 ff., 22:30, 25:34; Mark 10:17, 12:25; Luke 20:35-36. In the last passage we are told the life eternal is the full entrance upon Divine Sonship: "And are sons of God, being sons of the resurrection." *And his doctrine of immortality is always conceived and presented in ethical or spiritual terms.* The doctrine of individual immortality rests with him on the more primary and comprehensive doctrine of

*the absolute cosmic supremacy of the moral and spiritual order.* Resurrection and eternal life are the consequences of the allegiance manifested by the individual to spiritual values. It is he who has faith in and practises righteousness and love, he who gives a cup of cold water in His name, he who feeds the hungry, clothes the naked, and visits those who are sick and in prison, he who is loyal to the principles of righteousness and love as taught by the Master, who enters into the great reward. Compare the wonderfully beautiful and simple passage on eternal life, Matt. 25: 31-46.

The eternal life begins here and now for him who accepts and affirms these spiritual values. Immortality is not a state to be extraneously tacked on to the present one. "The kingdom of God is within you" (Luke 17: 21).

Jesus' fundamental principle in this regard is the *continuity of the moral and spiritual life now and hereafter.* The future life whether good or evil, whether in the completed Kingdom of Heaven or in Gehenna, the realm of punishment, grows out of the present life. Since the individual is now a participant in the spiritual issues of the world, so he must continue to be in the time to come. The fundamental teaching of Jesus is that the spiritual qualities of integrity in mind and heart, of loyalty to the good, of fellowship and service, of humble aspiration after and love for the Divine Goodness, are enduring and will be supreme and triumphant

in the universe. These qualities multiply and prevail in the world in part through their affirmation by individual wills and their rule in the hearts of individuals. And the wills and hearts in which these qualities rule have already entered into eternal life. Hence the faith in immortality, in the resurrection and the future triumph of the good and subjection of the evil, is a consequence of the more primary and fundamental faith in the supremacy of the spirit. Jesus teaches the continuance of the individual life as a consequence that flows from the conviction that the moral drama of life and of history will have a triumphant issue in the final and everlasting rule of the good and that, hence, the spirits of those who have affirmed the good and so coöperated with God — the Supremely Good — must endure and enjoy the fruition of their labours in His perfected rule.

The obverse of this belief in the eternal reward of righteousness is the punishment of the souls of those who have persistently chosen and wrought for evil (Matt. 5 : 29 f., 10 : 28 ; Mark 9 : 43, 45, 47 f.). The spiritual torment of the wicked (Luke 12 : 5), like the spiritual joy of the righteous, is generally presented in the gospels, in harmony with Jewish traditional views, as everlasting. This doctrine, however, is not stressed and there are occasional indications of a belief in a finite term of punishment and of the possibility of moral change in the intermediate state. Some are beaten with *few* stripes (Luke

12:46-48). The possibility of forgiveness in the next life seems to be implied in the statement that of only one sin, viz. that against the Holy Ghost, is it true that "neither in this world, nor in that which is to come" can it be forgiven (Matt. 12: 32). Charles, art. "Eschatology," in *Encyclopedia Biblica*, suggests that the appeal of the rich man in Hades to Abraham is a sign of belief in the possibility of moral growth after death. However repugnant the notion of future punishment may be to the minds of this generation, the belief in a moral order of the universe surely implies that the reality of wrong-doing involves the reality of injury and suffering to the soul. Let retribution be conceived in purely spiritual terms, it is not thereby eliminated. Sin and loss of spiritual integrity, moral suffering and atrophy, remain realities none the less; indeed much more, that their consequences are spiritual and deep graven in the soul and not administered by way of physical torments. Mark 9:42 ff. is conclusive evidence that the punishment is *spiritual*. He who may be repelled by the words attributed to Jesus on this point is reminded, in the first place, of the great part which the idea of retribution plays in the evolution of morality and of the tendency of the earlier and cruder forms of moral development to survive and intrude themselves at higher levels, and, as well, of the great *pedagogical* value of this idea now as always. Jesus speaks to awaken his hearers to the serious issues of life. The sayings that imply everlasting punishment

may be regarded either as instances in which, in order to awaken men's thoughts to the issues of life, he spoke to them of the great alternatives of the will in the terms and imagery current in his own age and among his own people, and hence best fitted to arouse them to a moral searching of heart; or these sayings may be regarded as instances in which the gospel writers have insensibly coloured, with the traditional current ideas in which their minds were steeped and from which they are not yet wholly free, original sayings in which the Master spoke only of the tremendous present and future consequences of choice in the moral and spiritual realm. My own view is that Jesus meant to convey to his hearers' minds the possibility of spiritual self-destruction. Only in the kingdom is there *life*. Far more deep-going and significant than the precise meaning of his occasional utterances on these points is the teaching of Jesus Christ as to God's infinite love and unwearying patience. This is the substance of his teaching and need be in no way seriously affected by one's interpretation of the origin and meaning of the sayings as to the future punishment.

He who accepts Jesus' principles of life, and labours in aspiration and endeavour to realize these principles, may well refrain from vain and profitless speculations in regard to the precise nature of the future state. Such an one may well, without fear or despair, recognize the mysteries and hopeless puzzles that encompass any attempt to determine

in what sense, if any, the memory of personal identity may continue. He may well be content with the faith that no moral and spiritual achievement will be lost, that what is *worthy* to endure will endure, and that, so far as the individual participates in the spirit of the Master by aspiration, resolve, and deed, his life *is* eternal. All further questions as to the shape the future life may take, as to the range of future possibilities open to the individual, or as to what individuality may mean hereafter, he will leave aside, waiting serenely for the day when he may "see face to face" and know as he is known. Sufficient will be the faith that honesty, truth, loyalty, justice, love, as qualities of the personal spirit must somehow endure.

## CHAPTER VII

### THE IDEA OF GOD

#### (1) *The Idea of God in General*

THE idea of God or of the ultimate Reality is not merely the supreme notion of the human reason. This notion is also of the utmost practical importance for the life of man. No serious, thinking man is devoid of some conception of the ultimate reality of the universe and of some conviction, formulated or instinctive, of his own relation to that reality. Any man who thinks at all must recognize his dependence on some universal principle of being. He may regard the ultimate reality simply as the sum-total or unity of the visible universe, as "an Infinite and Eternal Energy from which all things proceed;" he may say the world is ruled by an inscrutable Fate; he may try to conceive of the First Principle of things as a Universal Impersonal Spirit; or he may believe in a Personal God. But in every case he feels his dependence on and the vital relation of his life to this ultimate unity. And in the deeper moments of his inner experience a man will adore or contemplate with exaltation even an inscrutable Fate, a cosmic Energy, or an Impersonal Reason. In such

moments the barest abstraction of thought becomes clothed by human feeling with quasi-personal character and life. The human heart instinctively ascends in feeling to the Supreme Reality. This ascent appears to be an ineradicable impulse of human nature. It is the ascent of the imperfect to the perfect, the flight of the changing and temporal to the unchanging and eternal, of the finite individual to the infinite and absolute. And this impulse Godward, this search for the Perfect, instinctive and primal though it be, is enlarged and refined of its grosser elements with the growth of human thought. Science and Philosophy do not banish it. They only transform and purify the notion of God.

Let us briefly consider, before taking account of Jesus' contribution to the idea of God, in what direction and how far scientific and philosophic reflection will carry us. Let us inquire how far the human instinct for God seems to have a legitimate basis in thought. I do not propose to give here an elaborate disquisition on the philosophical idea of God or to discuss in detail the various historical arguments for the Divine Reality. I propose to sketch very briefly what I conceive to be the philosophical foundation of the notion of God in order that we may be able to see the more clearly what is the relation of Jesus' teaching to this notion and why his contribution has a distinctively ethical and spiritual character.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> I beg leave to refer the reader for a critical and metaphysical discussion of the idea of God to my *Typical Modern Conceptions*



The whole development of science points toward the *unity of the universe*. For early man the world was chaotic and fragmentary just as his own social and individual activity was devoid of system and order. But the growth in human control of nature and in the stable organization of society have gone hand in hand with the discovery of *order in the universe*. Science proceeds upon the assumption, which is triumphantly verified more fully from day to day, that the universe is a whole of interrelated parts. And the laws of nature, in Physics, Chemistry, and Biology, are the general principles of these interrelations. We do not indeed yet know what is the relation of every bit of matter or every living thing or every change that takes place in things to the world as a whole, and, consequently, we cannot say completely in detail just how the physical or empirical world is one. But that all parts of the world-order are bound together in one system of relations, and that in this order nothing happens in one part or element without corresponding changes in the other things closely related to it, the progress

of God (Longmans, Green & Co., 1901) and the concluding chapters of my *Personality and Reality* (in preparation).

The reader who is interested in the philosophical foundations of the doctrine of God is further referred to Josiah Royce and others, *The Conception of God*, and to Royce's *The World and the Individual*; James Ward, *Naturalism and Agnosticism*, vol. ii. part v.; James Martineau, *A Study of Religion*; E. Caird, *The Evolution of Religion*; and in German to R. Eucken's *Der Wahrheitsgehalt der Religion*; G. Class, *Die Realität der Gottesidee*, and H. Siebeck's *Lehrbuch der Religionsphilosophie*.

of scientific discovery entitles us to assume. Everywhere we find that the *facts* which are given to us in our experience are held together by *relations*. And these relations of facts to one another, these interdependencies of things in the natural order on one another's occurrences and activities, we express in our *scientific laws*. When we say that bodies in space attract one another inversely as the square of the distance, or that bodies fall to the earth with a uniform acceleration of 9.8 metres per second, we are formulating relationships. These laws are the expressions of the unity of the universe. When we say that those organisms survive and multiply which develop organs or functions that enable them the better to obtain food in a given environment and to protect themselves against enemies, we are again expressing the unity that obtains between the living organisms and their physical environment. And by a consideration of the progress that is constantly being made toward more comprehensive and more deep-reaching interpretations of the interrelations of things in the natural order we arrive at the notion that the *universe is one*, that the world which presents itself in perception as a multitudinous variety of things, beings, and qualities, more or less in apparent confusion and opposition, is in reality held together by one universal principle.

When we reflect more deeply on the nature of this unity in the universe we are carried farther. The unity of the universe exists for *thought*. It is a

*known unity* — a unity for human consciousness. Our conviction in regard to its reality grows as thought grows in the mastery of its materials of knowledge. But these materials, or data of thinking, a simple reflection reveals to be in the last resort *matters of human experience*. *We know no world apart from human experience*. Whatever conception of the world one may frame is derived finally from human perception. The unity of my world is a unity in and for my consciousness — a unity which grows out of my reflections on experience. And the case is precisely similar with your world and your experience. You and I each must find law, order, interrelation, in the facts of his own perceptual experience if the world is to be rationally one for us — if it is to be a world in which we can make plans for the future — go to sleep expecting to work to-morrow while it is day or sow our seed in the autumn expecting to reap a harvest the following summer. We could make no rational provision for the future — we could not live even as the beasts that perish — without the assumption of some sort of unity and uniformity in the universe.

Now you and I agree that we live in and experience *the same world*. It is perhaps not strictly true that we do experience in our individual perceptions an absolutely identical world, and certainly the world as it is *thought* varies very much from man to man. But the differences between our worlds are negligible. We are members of the same human family, the same

stage of civilized society, and we live under much the same general conditions of existence. We assume then that we perceive and know *the same world*. We coöperate in this world in order that we both may live, rear our families, have joy in life, achieve things in this common world in which we meet as members of human society. This *common universe* then is for us the basis of our social relations on which our weal and woe so completely depend. We perceive and think, we coöperate and carry out our purposes, we realize our lives' ends in the same world. *Now, since for each one of us the world which we know as a unity is a world experienced and thought or reflected on*, a world which is built up out of the materials of our own perceptions, since, in other words, the world as a unity has no meaning apart from human experience and reflection, if there really be a common world for you and me to know and to commune and coöperate in, its unity must be that supplied or constituted by a *unitary experience and thought, i.e. by a universal world-consciousness*.

A world-unity absolutely independent of and unrelated to any experience or any thinking consciousness is unintelligible. For you and me to find unity and rational order in our experiences, for us to meet on common ground and live in social relations, is to find ourselves and our experiences dependent on an ultimate and intelligible unity. What we mean by the "world" is a socially recognized basis of common experience, a universal experience which ren-

ders intelligible the thought of a common world. On the basis of their common experience men, by coöperative thinking, have steadily progressed in the discovery of reason or order in the world as a whole. Hence the world-order as a whole must be dependent on an intelligible experience. When man discovers order in the world-whole, he is discovering its dependence on a mind somehow akin to his own. In science the human reason interrogates the outer world and receives an answer in terms of reason, and this answer is mind speaking to mind across the deeps of the physical world. In finding order in nature the mind of man is finding the Divine Reason.

Thus we have a philosophical conception of God involved in the most elementary recognition of a world. The progressive unification of knowledge in man is inconceivable unless there be a unitary intelligence as the basis of a world. More specifically, man's knowledge of the physical world as *one* or as a system of interrelated parts, existing and moving in an orderly manner, would be impossible without his *social life*. It has been through intercommunication, coöperation, and the transmission of experience and its interpretations from age to age that mankind has gradually arrived at the notion of one universe of law or order. The most rudimentary social life or coöperation and communion of man with man involves this recognition of

a common world. Moreover, through the growth of human society in stability and organization which in turn brings and involves increasing mastery over nature, and through that conception of *law or order in events and actions which has grown out of the very submission of the individual's impulses to social custom and law*, there arises the notion of a like order or law in the physical world.

The unitary intelligence or universal self-consciousness is, then, conceived as the common source and ground of order in nature and of order in human society. And, since it is the work of society to subordinate nature to human ends and so to further the fuller achievement of human purposes, the unitary intelligence who is the universal common ground of natural order and social order must be conceived as sustaining and furthering somehow in a systematic unity of life and action the most comprehensive ends or purposes of human society and of the individual life. So man's highest philosophical conception of God is teleological and social, *i.e.* God is conceived as somehow originating and directing the course of the whole universe in harmony with the highest interests and ends of social humanity. And here we reach the limits of philosophical inquiry in this matter and, indeed, find ourselves already on debatable ground. For the higher we rise in our conception of the cosmic intelligence and the more closely we bring our conception of Him into harmony with human interest, purpose, and destiny, the more

vague our conception becomes and the more difficult to square with the tangled facts of experience. For human purposes are defeated as well as realized. Human life and ideals sometimes seem to be the sport of blind chance. Even the spiritual life seems sadly hindered by the contingencies of the natural order. Physical weakness brings grinding poverty and poverty cramps the development of the higher side of man's life. A clot on the brain seems to cause the total eclipse of a bright and brave spirit. The inference from the unity of the universe in our experience and thought to the unity of a supreme intelligence is perfectly valid. The inference to an *ethical purpose and character* in the universal consciousness or mind is a postulate derived from and supported by the unity of human society in and for which the world exists as an intelligible universe. But the specific and definite harmony of the originating and sustaining activity of the Supreme Mind with the higher interests and aims of society and, more especially, with the highest life of the individual seems at best to be a conception having only a *probable* value. The evolution of human society and its achievements in science, arts, and morals, point toward such a teleological notion of God as in harmony with human aims and as sustaining the historical and social evolution of culture. But in the last resort, the belief in such a harmony, while it has a rational justification in the facts of human evolution in knowledge and morals, must rest in a

*personal deed and experience.* Theoretically we may legitimately infer the existence of a supreme mind manifested in the systematic unity of the natural order and revealed more fully in the development of man's historical and social life. Practically this inference becomes a concrete and living conviction or reality in the experience of the individual as a self-active spiritual being who realizes his higher life in society through the successful pursuit of ends and in obedience to ideals.

There remains then yet one other consideration and indeed, to the ethical spirit of man, the very strongest consideration of all, from which the inference to the existence of a Supreme Holiness and Righteousness is drawn. This is the argument from the absolutely binding force of a *moral ideal*, the sense of an unconditional obligation to think and do right. For the man in whom the ethical spirit is alive *justice* and *truth* represent *unconditional obligations*. He must and will act as if they must prevail in the world and his action implies the belief that they *will* prevail. The supreme obligation to follow after truth and justice and to endeavour to make these ideals effective in human society rests upon the faith in a *moral order of the universe*. The man who elects to be honest, to be just, to seek and speak truth at whatever cost, in so acting postulates the supremacy of these ethical principles over the brute facts of nature and history. But in the last analysis all moral qualities inhere in *persons*. There is nothing un-



conditionally good but the good will or disposition of an individual spirit. All so-called "goods" are to be tested by their relation to human character. And in a final analysis all social principles of ethics refer to relations between persons or at least between sentient beings. We may owe duties to animals, but we certainly owe none to brute matter or energy.

If there be an ultimate moral order such that the *good* does or will in the end prevail, if the natural order of existence is subordinate and subservient to the moral order, this order in turn must be embodied in a Person. If justice and truth prevail, if the good triumph finally then, since moral qualities belong only to conscious selves, there must be a Supreme and Righteous Self or Person.

Thus from a consideration of what is involved in the unconditioned obligations to truth and justice and righteousness we are led necessarily to the notion of a Personal God, not, as Kant urged, in order that virtue and happiness may be made to coincide, but that virtue or moral goodness may prevail or triumph and endure. And if we feel an unconditioned or inviolable obligation to serve truth and justice, we cannot believe that these principles may perish or that they have no standing in the real universe.

Of course the force of this argument depends on the recognition of the absolute supremacy of moral principles. He for whom social justice or individual righteousness simply means the greatest possible pleasure, or for whom the true is only the

useful, will not be influenced by such considerations. For such an one God at the most would be the dispenser of pleasures, the ruler of a Mahommedan paradise filled with houris and sweet viands where, to use Heine's phrase, roast geese flew about with gravy-boats in their bills.

## (2) *Jesus' Idea of God*

Profound convictions as to man's destiny and place in the universe and as to God's nature and attitude toward man have always arisen and spread in the shape of facts and influences in the *historical-spiritual life of man*. In particular the ideas of God which have prevailed in and powerfully influenced human culture have been the utterance of great personalities not only in *word* but in *deed*. By *living* and *doing* rather than arguing and demonstrating have Moses and Isaiah, Mahomet and Luther, profoundly influenced men's religious convictions.

And, in a supreme degree, Jesus' personal attitude and life have been the source of the revolution he has wrought in men's ideas concerning God and in their vital and active feelings and convictions in regard to Him. I have already said that the vital conviction of a God as a spiritual being standing in actual relation to the spiritual experiences and ethical deeds of the individual springs from the innermost depths of the human personality. This conviction is the offspring and expression of the *heart* or *whole nature of man*. Now it was (*and it is*) through his

influence on the entire personality, on the heart and will of the individual man, that Jesus wrought (and still works) his revolution in men's thought in regard to God's character and attitude toward man.

Jesus does not argue and does not demonstrate God's being. He gives no proofs, ontological, cosmological, or teleological, of God's existence. He assumes that there exists a Supreme Mind or Person, all-powerful, all-knowing, all-Holy. He assumes the supreme unity of Truth and Power in a Divine Intelligence. He places *first*, as the supreme attribute in God, the governing principle in His relation to man — Love. Love that transcends, and uses as its instrument, omnipotence and omniscience, Love that passes beyond mere justice and righteousness, Love infinite in patience and forgiveness and eternal in well-doing, Jesus declares to be the heart of God. This is his unique and unparalleled contribution to the idea of God. This is his revolution in ethical theology. The doctrine of God which Jesus offers is absolutely ethical and spiritual.

Now he does not argue men into accepting this view of God. He does not demonstrate logically that it must be true. He affirms it as an unshaken, sun-clear intuition of God which he himself possesses in absolute measure. The word "Father" had been applied to God before Jesus used the term. But what a world of new meaning it gets in Jesus' mouth! How without argument or theological disquisition he revolutionized men's feelings about God! Through

Jesus men *feel* the Father's living presence and are made joyful in the new-found sense of God's personal presence and interest in them and in their lives. "Your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things" (Matt. 6:32). "God is not the God of the dead, but of the living" (Matt. 22:32, Mark 12:27, etc.). "If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in Heaven give good things to them that ask Him?" (Matt. 7:11, etc.).

No, Jesus offers no theoretical demonstration of God's existence. He does not discourse concerning God's infinitude or finitude, His transcendency or immanency, His substantiality, or actuality, the creation of the world in time or out of time, etc. His demonstration of God's reality and nature is the challenge and appeal of a perfect ethical or spiritual personality to a humanity that is seeking the highest. Jesus' notion of God is *absolutely ethical* or *spiritual*. It is in the heart of man, in the innermost citadel of the affections, in the central source of human will and action, in the concrete personal spirit, that Jesus works a transformation in man's sense of the Divine Reality. And he works this transformation by virtue of his own personal power, by the total impress and inspiration of a God-filled human character. That which stands out supreme in the pages of the gospel is the God-penetrated human personality of the master. Jesus' *life* was his contribution to man's knowledge of God.

His whole personality was the source of the transformation he wrought in men's feelings about God and this transformation was preëminently ethical. It was and ever is an inward new birth and a redemption in which the twice-born soul is an active participant.

For Jesus works the great change in men's hearts by force of a personal appeal which challenges men to *deeds*, to new *resolves* and *choices*. He calls forth ever renewed ethical endeavour and he reveals new reaches of spiritual experience, in that he leads men through the demands of ethical justice and love to communion with God. The effect of his influence is to deepen men's sense of the meaning and worth of the higher personal life in all humanity. Faith in God becomes simply the completer experience of the *eternal* basis of ethical deeds and the ground of fresh spiritual aspiration. Jesus calls men to spiritual deeds, to deeds of justice, of mercy, of love, to a devotion in which the lower or sensuous life of the individual is merged and transformed in the service of a spiritual humanity. Through these spiritual deeds men's experiences grow in depth and purity. Through them men gain the practical conviction of God's personal nature as Sustainer and Ground of the higher or ethical life in human persons. Spiritual faith in God begins in vital deeds. Through the personal act of faith the venture and the deed ripen to new insight, to deeper experience. Faith thus becomes an ethical or spiritual *act* — a

deed of freedom. And the act of faith becomes anticipatory of fuller knowledge of God. As men work for the true, the just, for love and beauty in human life, the conviction must grow upon them that their spiritual deeds are permanent in effect and meaning and this implies the conviction of God's Reality as Supreme and Holy Personality. The service of the larger life, the life of truth and justice and love in human relations, deepens men's insight into God's nature as sustainer of the ethical life in the individual. Through their own personal growth in the ethical life men come to see that God reveals Himself in the social and historical development of the human spirit as well as in the inmost secret centre of the personal life. It is through this active service of the good that men gain the conviction that nature is really and ultimately subordinate to human ends and that the social and historical development of humanity, in all its institutions and activities, gets permanent significance only in so far as these things serve as instruments of the higher spiritual life. Through this personal service men come to see in God the supreme ground of all. He is known through personal ethical deeds, through communion with and participation in the work of humanity. Jesus calls men to these deeds. He stirs up in them these experiences. He has done so through his life, but also through his death. For in him teaching and deed were absolutely one and harmonious. His death was the supreme *deed* of

his life, for it was the final and complete expression of the purpose and meaning of his life. Hence the supreme ethical significance of that death. The life had been the perfect embodiment of the absolute Love of God which was Jesus' one message to man. He lived as the incarnation of his message and his death was the seal thereof. And the resurrection has its ethical and spiritual significance as the expression of the triumph of the Personal Spirit of Jesus, the perfect embodiment of Love, over brute nature and the forces of evil in human society. Faith in the resurrection is the symbol of Faith in Righteousness and Love as Triumphant and Divine. Since, moreover, ethical qualities always inhere in persons or spiritual selves, this faith must and does take the form of faith in the continued personal existence of Jesus Christ and of his spiritual presence in the lives of the individual and the church.

Through Jesus' personality as teacher and doer, then, the moral postulate of the Reality of a supreme ethical Person or Absolute Spirit becomes a historically potent faith rooted in and growing through ethical activity and aspiration. Hence it is that faith in God as more than at best an impersonal intelligence or abstract ethical world-order is generated through contact with Jesus and through acceptance of his challenge to spiritual action. Hence it is that communion with a living and loving God is historically mediated through Jesus.

From the ethical standpoint, then, we may say that

the supreme deed of Jesus, the source of his abiding meaning and efficiency in the spiritual history of man, is the creation in the human heart of the living and growing conviction of the Reality of a Transcendent or Absolute Spirit of Righteousness and Love who rules and guides the movement of human history as well as that of external nature.

Through his life and through his summons to deeds in devotion to man's spiritual life Jesus inspires men with the confidence that at the heart of the universe there dwells not an impersonal abstraction, but a Life and Love in which we share.

This confidence must begin perhaps weakly in a personal venture or act of faith. But in him who companies with Jesus it grows into something like full insight. Faith becomes anticipatory to knowledge. But whether the relationship be one preëminently of faith or insight, in any case it is rooted in personal *deeds* — in acts of spiritual freedom. And, in affirming the true, the just, and the merciful, man is always on the road to this faith.

We have said that Jesus' contribution to the idea of God was that of a *personal life*. And when we have fathomed the secret and mysterious movements of personality and traced to their ultimate source the up-welling fountains of inspiration that come out of the heart of a perfect life, then and only then may we claim to have sounded the depths of the religion of Jesus.

But there is one problem that arises in connection



with the ethical conception of God which we have not considered and we must at least discuss Jesus' practical attitude thereto. This is the problem of evil.

### (3) *The Problem of Evil*

Jesus offers no theoretical justification of God's goodness in relation to the evil of the world. He does not theorize at all on this matter. Evil is for him a condition of actual existence to be faced and conquered rather than to be theorized about or explained away. Nevertheless if we look closely at his practical attitude we shall find it involves a doctrine of evil and a theodicy or justification of the ways of God.

And what we have in mind here is the problem of *moral evil*, of the reality of sin in a universe which is dependent upon and governed by an All-Holy Being.

In order that we may see clearly the nature of the issue here we must carefully distinguish between the existence of physical evil, natural catastrophes, physical suffering, the untimely death of the brightest and best, etc., and the actuality of human wrongdoing, of moral failure and deliberate sin.

I have already dealt with the problem of physical or natural evil in the chapter entitled "Nature and Human Nature." I may here remind the reader that Jesus does not regard external misfortunes and physical sufferings as the fruits of individual guilt. "Or those eighteen upon whom the tower in Siloam

fell and killed them thinkest thou that they were sinners above all men?" (Luke 13 : 4). "And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul; but rather fear him that hath power to destroy both soul and body in hell" (Matt. 10 : 28).

Jesus is ever tender and compassionate toward suffering and misfortune. But these he simply recognizes as part of the natural order in an imperfect world. He does not even trace the origin of these physical evils to the fall of Adam. He does not say that we are all enmeshed in a social doom from which some may be snatched by God's unsearchable decrees. Jesus clearly sees that while moral evil sometimes brings physical suffering in its train, this is by no means always the case, and he calls on his disciples to alleviate, as he alleviates, suffering and to overcome and to free themselves from the fear of physical evil.

His fundamental attitude is that the spiritual life of man is superior to all shapes of physical evil, that it can endure throughout the direst suffering and that the exercise of this heroic endurance and the courageous assertion of the inviolability of the soul in the face of physical wreck is rewarded by a deeper happiness. Jesus teaches further that there is an eternal law of compensation in the universe. Lazarus who hungered and suffered on earth, in paradise lies on Abraham's bosom while the self-indulgent and un pitying rich man suffers torments.

On the other hand the entire teaching and appeal

of Jesus to the spirit and will of man involves his belief in man's *moral responsibility*. The soul of the individual is endowed with power to choose and on it are imposed tremendous responsibilities. "If thine eye be evil, pluck it out, and cast it from thee. It is better to enter into life with one eye, rather than having two eyes to be cast into hell fire" (Matt. 18 : 9).

The origin of moral evil is in the *will of the individual*. The possibilities of sin reside in the inherited nature of man by which the individual is tied up with the life of the race. The materials of human character lie in the inherited dispositions, inborn tendencies of the individual, and by these his life is bound up with the past of his race. Furthermore a man's actual character is largely dependent on the influence of social and even of physical environments. All these forces making for the determination of character Jesus recognizes. "Unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall much be required" (Luke 12 : 48). But in the last resort the moral quality of man rises from his heart. In the tragic issues of life Jesus holds that sin is the offspring of the human will. He sees in its universal possibility for man the consequence of that power of free self-determination by which alone man is higher than brute-nature and able to direct his own growth Godward. The problem of moral evil then, as Jesus treats it, reduces itself to the ultimate nature of free moral beings. Since men are free, sin becomes

a reality through the weakness of the higher will as against the lower impulses and, in some cases, through the apparently demoniacal preference of evil to good.

Jesus recognizes fully the reality of moral evil or sin. He deepens men's sense of its enormity and its dread power over life. And he does not attempt the impossible task of showing why or how the existence of beings with the possibility of evil in their hearts is a necessary consequence of God's creative activity. He does not teach men either that God was or was not limited to this present world-order in his choice of a world to call into being. Jesus simply takes the world as it exists to be dependent on God without calling into question God's goodness or His infinite power in creating this world.

And in this world, as he looks it squarely in the face, Jesus finds in the hearts of men the dread possibilities and actualities of sin. But this is not all that he has to say. Weak though he be, man has yet the power to respond to the call of the good. Awful though evil seem to be, it is overcome by love. Mysterious and tragic seems the life of man aspiring heavenward but ever falling back into the mire. But man is through all a child of God — an offspring of a Cosmic, Personal Love, and this Love is ever triumphant over evil. It is quite true that Jesus recognizes the existence of a positive principle of evil in the world of human society. He uses the terms of contemporary Hebrew thought for this principle. Like his fellow-countrymen he speaks of Satan as

a person and as the prince of evil. To use the terms current in his time was a part of Jesus' pedagogical method. Without going into the question whether all these sayings in regard to Satan are genuine utterances of the Master, we may say that it is in entire consonance with Jesus' ethical teaching that he should have recognized the solidarity of the race in respect of evil as well as of good, and no other great teacher has ever so clearly seen and taught the social or communal interdependence of the human race. And it is a corollary of this social solidarity that the innocent should suffer for the guilty, and that men should be redeemed from the power of the positive principle of evil in the race by the absolute devotion of the good. The spread of evil through heredity and social contagion must be checked and overcome through the contagious inspiration and power of love. Jesus' recognition of the necessity of his death for the completion of his work and teaching is the clearest expression of this principle. He dies that men may know and be touched by the power of love over evil and hatred.

Nor does Jesus deny that there may be some ultimate mysterious connection of moral evil with physical evil. The very solidarity of the race, which he explicitly recognizes, implies some relation between physical suffering and moral evil. What Jesus does explicitly deny is that the physical evil or suffering which overtakes the individual is of necessity either the consequence of his own wrong-

doing or that of his parents, or even that physical evil or suffering has a merely disciplinary character. Natural catastrophes, unavoidable pain, and mental suffering are simply to be taken as things to be endured and made the best of through faith in the Absolute or Supreme Love who will not permit the soul that heroically believes and endures to suffer any final and irreparable loss. The power of God's love to restore the sinner and the wanderer to his true destiny of communion with God Himself is limited only by the presence or absence of man's initial act of turning, howsoever weakly and blindly, toward the good and of opening his soul to the currents of spiritual life that flow from the Father's heart.

Jesus sees in the actual moral evil of humanity the mysterious blending of ignorance and error with deliberate choice, the inextricable interfusion of the personal attitude of wrong-doing with the weakness of inherent tendencies and wild natural passions. He sees the taint of evil social influence warping the naturally good tendencies of the soul. Even in his bitterest enemies he sees the fatal blindness of tradition and the power of prejudice and authority interwoven with conscious and personal hostility to the higher good revealed in himself. Even here in the last crisis of his life, with the insight of a super-human Love, Jesus recognizes that the souls of these who repudiate absolute love and goodness and crucify him for his devotion to man's righteousness

and eternal blessedness are warped by ingrained prejudice, blinded by the fateful influences of ecclesiastical authority and national pride. He does not attempt to separate the error from the evil, to sift the conscious element of sin from the force of ignorance. His words are — “Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do” (Luke 23:34). Jesus sees the mystery and tragedy involved in the confused intermixture of error and sin in human life, of vicious habit ignorantly acquired, of love turned to lust, of noble strength turned to destruction, by the force of circumstances and the harsh condemnation of a world cold and blind in its judgments. He warns his disciples — “Judge not, that ye be not judged” (Matt. 7:1).

But, notwithstanding all the sin and error in the world, men are still children of God. The Father welcomes the prodigal son. There is ever joy in heaven that the errant son has wakened to a consciousness of his true destiny and turned his steps homeward. Over all evil and ignorance there rules supreme a Divine Love and Grace. Man is in essence a moral and spiritual being. As such he must, by his own actions and through his own individual experience, find God, and in finding God find his own true selfhood. And the practical solution of the problem of evil which Jesus offers is that when man does awake to a sense of his Divine destiny and seek God’s righteousness there is at the heart of things a Supreme Love with the power and the will to

free him from the misery and the burden of sin. The problem of evil is solved through the conviction that a Personal, Cosmic Love works in and with the human will in its endeavours after goodness. This conviction Jesus engenders by his teaching and his life and death. His whole earthly career was the utterance of this conviction. His death was the final act of affirmation of the absolute supremacy of Love and Grace in the universe. The whole earthly career of Jesus was the witness to his unshakable assurance of the triumph of Righteousness and Love in the universe, and the faith in his resurrection and continued existence are the seal and symbol of that assurance born in the hearts of the sons of men by companionship with the Master.

For the follower of Jesus, then, the problem of evil is not solved by denying its reality or asserting that God is limited by it. The practical solution of the problem lies in the total influence of Jesus' life, death, and risen life by which men are awakened to the conviction that their true and ethical destiny is to be co-workers with God and so sharers in the spiritual movement of the universe. Faith in Jesus is the expression of faith in the triumph of personal goodness and love in the universe. Faith in Jesus is hence an ethical faith and it strengthens man's powers to strive for the good while at the same time it cheers him with the knowledge that, though he may fall far short through ignorance or sin, God's supreme attribute is Love. Through the out-going



of this love without stint the better tendencies of human nature are strengthened to overcome the evil within the heart and to bear the ills incident to human nature.

Jesus' own personal life and attitude is his solution of the problem of evil. If he be the true expression of God's attitude toward man, then is evil already overcome.

## CHAPTER VIII

### THE INFLUENCE OF JESUS' TEACHING AND OF OTHER ETHICAL SYSTEMS

THE whole earthly career of Jesus Christ was the incorporation of his teaching in life and action. His ethical principles constitute a coherent whole, but they are not a cunningly devised system put together by reflection. They are a series of genial intuitions, that flow spontaneously from a living personality whose meaning and the secret of whose influence they do not exhaust. As we study them, these ethical or spiritual intuitions lead us back to him and, indeed, they seem but the casual utterances of a spirit so infinitely rich and full that we cannot comprehend it in the mystery of its strength and beauty, but that we grow to feel more fully as we endeavour to live out its promptings. Hence the *living* and perennial *power* of Jesus as an ethical teacher. Many philosophical systems of ethics seem more rigorous and systematically complete than his; but, perhaps, in part, for this very reason they one and all lack the touch of life and the power of expansion.

Let us pause for a moment to compare the ethical influence of Jesus' teaching with more formal sys-

tems. The two great ethical schools of the Græco-Roman world diverged greatly in their definitions of the *summum bonum*, since according to the Epicureans this was pleasure, pure and lasting; an æsthetic enjoyment of life attained through moderation of desire, reflection, and social urbanity of disposition; and, according to the Stoics, a life in harmony with reason or nature. But these schools converged in their picture of the ideal wise man or sage, whose chief concern was to make himself proof against "the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune," by keeping himself free from all social, political, and family entanglements and so independent of all intense affections and external vicissitudes. The Stoics identified the nature of things with *Reason*, and, hence, for them a life guided by reason was a life according to nature, a happy life. The Epicureans taught that a life of pleasure or happiness, lasting and free from admixture of pain, was attainable only through a reflective serenity of mind and a prudent detachment of heart, since only in this way could a man insure his own freedom from extremes of inner feeling and from the power of vicissitudes of circumstance to hurt him. Hence the Epicurean employed reason to attain purity and duration of pleasurable feeling and eschewed the violent commotions of the coarser pleasures; whereas the Stoic, subduing emotion by the exercise of will and reason, found a mild and lasting pleasure therein. Starting with apparently antithetical aims, Stoic and Epicurean



sage arrived at pretty nearly the same goal. The wise man of both schools was a refined and philosophical egoist who would allow no social ties, of whatsoever description, to encroach on his serenity of mind. He would give no hostages to fortune. It is true the great Stoics<sup>1</sup> contributed more that is positive to human culture than did the Epicureans. There is in the former a strain of stern strength, a tonic quality of mind, that the latter lack. The Stoics developed in some degree a feeling of *obligation*, which led them bravely to face the tasks that confronted them, although no social or political activity could be to them of first importance ethically. Stoicism fostered a manly and vigorous type of character in which all stress was laid on the inward, moral disposition. The Stoics advanced the doctrine of a common humanity, a universal brotherhood, based on the view that all men are fundamentally alike; since they are all the offspring of the natural order and have all a share in the universal reason or law which is the soul of nature. So far their teaching approximates to the ethics of Jesus. But the Stoics were prone to place a wide gap between the few wise men who recognized the rationality and goodness of the natural order and the many fools. Hence, while recognizing fully the value of this teaching, especially in furnishing a philosophical foundation for the administration of justice in the Roman Empire and in developing a more humane

<sup>1</sup> Zeno, Chrysippus, Seneca, Marcus Aurelius, Epictetus.

disposition, one may rightly insist that the Stoic principles were well-nigh devoid of moral *dynamic*. They lacked the creative, spiritual energy that the ancient world needed; they were deficient in warmth and devotion and had not the power to enkindle a new world-movement. They expressed no gentle and yet burning *love* for men. There is a long interval between the theoretical deduction of universal brotherhood from the common dependence of man on nature or on an abstract universal Reason, and active love for man based on the faith in the infinite value of the individual soul in the eyes of a Common Father whose inmost nature and attitude toward mankind is believed to have been embodied in a historical human personality who has so perfectly embodied the principle that the very memory of him enkindles passionate devotion and enthusiastic love.

In many respects the ethics of that greatest of philosophers, Plato, remind one of the gospels. His saying that it is better to suffer than to do injustice is prophetic of the teaching of Jesus.<sup>1</sup> His picture of the idealized Master, Socrates, reminds one in some respects of the gospel portrait of the Christ, especially in the manner in which he bears witness to his doctrine by his death. Plato's doctrine of the good, as the supreme cosmic principle, strongly resembles the gospel teaching in regard to the Heavenly Father who is alone Good. And the Platonic

<sup>1</sup> *The Republic*, Book II.

notion of *Eros*, or love, the burning enthusiasm or devotion that carries the soul onward and upward from lower to higher, from things of sense to things of the mind, from bodily beauty up through mental beauty to the beauty of goodness, until at last it finds repose and joy in the contemplation of the Supreme Good, is not unlike the gospel doctrine of that love for righteousness and peace which inspires and guides men toward perfection in the image of a Heavenly Father.<sup>1</sup>

None the less, there are great differences between the ethics of Plato and the ethics of Jesus Christ. Plato's way of salvation is for the few who have and develop the power of reflective contemplation. It is speculative and aristocratic. The mass of men do not and cannot attain unto it. They must remain simply hewers of wood and drawers of water. The highest virtue to which the artisan and merchant class in Plato's ideal commonwealth can attain is temperance. They have no immediate part in justice, *i.e.* they do not directly participate in its realization, — much less in wisdom, the highest virtue, the virtue of the noblest part of the soul. Moreover, the Supreme Good in Plato's system is, after all, an unhistorical abstraction, a metaphysical entity; not a living personality who stands in reciprocal or social relations of love with men. The Supreme Good of Plato is not a living principle that enters into organic relations with men in society

<sup>1</sup> See especially the *Symposium*.

and that fulfils itself through sympathy and labour in the historical life of humanity.

Hence, while Plato clearly sees the necessity of the social life to the full fruition of humanity, the goal of the philosopher lies beyond the personal and social life. The philosopher only takes part reluctantly in the affairs of state. He does not find his highest life in service but in contemplation. Hence, too, the ascetic and dualistic strain that often predominates in Plato, although by no means always; *e.g.* not in the Republic. Withdrawal from the world and the denial of the bodily life with its manifold claims and interest are necessary to the attainment of Wisdom, the highest Good. It is, of course, true that the lowlier virtues of temperance and courage are the necessary prerequisites to the attainment of the higher virtues of justice and wisdom, and the way to perfection lies through the social life. Nevertheless for Plato ethical perfection is attained by contemplation and thought. It lies beyond the social life. As the teaching of Jesus knows *no distinction of higher and lower in virtue*, so it knows no state of blessedness in which one's fellows may be forgotten. God himself is a social Being.

Modern systems of ethics that have been influential have, in so far as they have gone beyond Greek ethics, arisen from a common moral consciousness into which the Christian element has entered as a dominant, transforming influence. These independent systems have unconsciously drawn upon Christian

motives, ideas, and aims that have become worked into the very fibre of moral tradition. The seeming independence of these modern systems is due in large part to the fact that, drawing from a common and generally diffused moral consciousness, which is the heritage of Christian civilization, they have formulated, in terms of an independent philosophy of conduct, principles that are Christian in motive, but have usually forgotten or ignored their own sources. Influential modern ethical systems, up to the advent of Darwinism and the application of this theory to conduct, have invariably taken up some element of the moral common sense of a civilization that has absorbed the Christian point of view. Hence, the obvious reasonableness of the appeal that these systems make and the appearance they show of standing on their own feet, of being free from traditional presuppositions. The two most influential ethical doctrines in recent times have been *Utilitarianism* in its several forms, and the doctrine of *Self-Perfection*, or *Self-Realization*, as the highest good or ultimate standard of conduct. Without the Christian principle that the true or ideal self is social in character, and that, hence, spiritual personality is attained by the life of service and fellowship, the doctrine of Self-Perfection, *i.e.* of the full and harmonious development of the individual's capacities, as the *End* or *Highest Good*, becomes at best a refined and enlightened Egoism — a reflective pursuit of the maximum of individual culture and happiness with-



out regard to the welfare of others. What self-perfection means, in terms of the ethics of Jesus, has already been considered at length in this and the preceding chapters and need not detain us here.

Utilitarianism, or universalistic Hedonism, the view which regards the greatest happiness of the greatest number,<sup>1</sup> or the greatest pleasure for one's self and others taken together, *i.e.* the greatest attainable pleasure on the whole,<sup>2</sup> as the Highest Good or standard of conduct, has no other independent psychological basis than the fact that men do desire pleasure and that, because of the inborn feeling of sympathy, the pleasure of others *may be* a pleasure for the individual. In strict logic this theory is not entitled to assert that there is any *obligation* on the part of the individual to seek higher pleasures at the expense of lower pleasures, or the pleasures of others at the expense of his own pleasure. The passage from the *fact* that a man seeks his own pleasure to the theory that every man *ought* to promote the pleasures of others or the greatest attainable pleasure of all seems easily made and makes a strong appeal to unreflecting common sense, because the teaching of Jesus as to mutual service, sympathy, and fellowship has become engrained in the common sense of men and has become part and parcel of the moral consciousness of the occidental world.

In this sense, then, the doctrines of Utilitarianism have received acceptance and flourished because of

<sup>1</sup> J. S. Mill.

<sup>2</sup> Henry Sidgwick.

their parasitic character. Their altruistic and truly moral element is not derived from their psychological starting-point that pleasure is, as a fact, the end of man's endeavour. This view does not logically lead beyond an enlightened Egoism. The fact, if it be a fact (which I, for one, do not admit), that men always seek the greatest attainable pleasure for themselves, carries with it no obligation for me to seek any pleasure for other men at my own expense. If pleasure be the sole end of action, then, since I am a social being, an enlightened and prudential selfishness may lead me to promote the pleasures of other men in order to lighten social friction and by sympathy (if I am sympathetic) to enhance my own pleasure. But, in case of doubt or conflict between my immediate pleasure and the pleasure of even all other sentient beings, pleasure as a standard does not imply an *obligation* to any sacrifice on my part.

It is not meant by this argument that there is no independent field for philosophical ethics, or that, outside of Jesus' teachings and the sphere of their historical influence, there has been no progress in ethical insight or moral practice. The ethical teaching of Jesus is of infinitely more value to man if it be in harmony with the general upward tendencies of human culture and serve to complete and to justify these tendencies, by revealing their ultimate foundations, than if this teaching were in opposition to, if it excluded or contravened, the principles of a human

morality worked out through the incalculable ages in which man has developed from the life of brute instinct to the life of rationality and sociality.

With reference not only to the heart of Hebrew ethics, to Moses and the prophets, but as well with reference to the entire movement of moral and humane culture, it may be said of Jesus that he came not to destroy but to fulfil. That the moral foundations of civilization find their highest interpretation and illumination, as well as motive power, in the teachings and work of Jesus and in the moral life that has historically issued from his life is the contention of the present work.<sup>1</sup> And if modern psychology and philosophy discover the conditions of personal growth, in all that concerns the spirit of man, to be social, and the dynamic of social progress to be the birth of ideals in the rational spirit of free individuality, that is not robbing Jesus of his greatness. It is a contribution to his glory as pioneer and leader of the new humanity.

But, on the other hand, I would insist that philosophical ethics is unfruitful unless it be based on the history of culture. Common-sense morality, as reflected in feeling and opinion to-day, is a product of historical development. The history of civilization furnishes the materials for ethical reflection. An abstract theory that attempts to define, by process of pure logic and from formal premises, the highest good and

<sup>1</sup> For a good picture of the immediate moral effects of the gospel, see E. von Dobschütz, *Christian Life in the Primitive Church*.

the meaning of virtue, without building upon the moral factors that have gone to the shaping of our civilization, is of little meaning and of no practical value.<sup>1</sup> And without doubt, from the standpoint of the history of western culture, the influence of Jesus and the impulses set going by him have been the most powerful ideals or conscious factors in forming our civilization on its moral side, just as Greek influences have contributed most to purely intellectual progress.

Other ethical doctrines have had their day and passed away. Each has doubtless given some light and had some influence toward the growth of humane civilization. But beside that of Jesus they all seem formal and powerless except for the sporadic few who can live by the dry light of reason; or else where they have convincing and inspiring power they are parasitic. For example, Kant, the greatest moral philosopher of modern times, in his fundamental insights, simply gives formal expression to various aspects of the ethics of Jesus Christ. His Kingdom of Ends, or Kingdom of Personalities, is Jesus' Kingdom of Heaven garbed in other phrases.

The spirit of Christ still draws and instructs men with *power* and not as the Scribes; the power is that of a life that does not infringe on the freedom of our souls, that does not intimidate or impose an external

<sup>1</sup> In an article entitled "Ethics, Sociology, and Personality" in the *Philosophical Review*, Vol. XV., pp. 494 ff., I have developed this contention in more technical form.

compulsion, but that gently draws us to him ; humbles, cheers, and quickens us with a tenderness and sweetness that is yet strong with a strength that never wavers in the face of conflict, suffering, or doubt.

Jesus speaks with *authority* in matters of conduct and life, but the authority is not the external constraint of an institution or an organization, nor the dogmatism of a cut-and-dried system that chills the spirit and fetters the reason.<sup>1</sup> His moral authority is that of a perfect life, which, as we submit to its influences, arouses an answering witness in our hearts and wins our consent with the personal conviction that, in the company of this life, our personalities are coming to their own, are ever growing in harmony and peace, and in the fellowship of the Life Divine and Immortal ; the life in which man truly finds himself at home in the cosmos because his soul has broken its local and temporal fetters and, through entrance upon a new humanity, is become one with God.

In short, Jesus' own life and personality is the ultimate source of his moral influence. He taught

<sup>1</sup> It is a strange and fateful blindness that still leads so-called official representatives of Jesus Christ loudly to proclaim that there is no other way to know and serve the great Master of living, no way by which men's souls may be enlarged and quickened, no way for the weary and heavy-laden to gain peace from him, except through submission to the constraint of some formal institution or cut-and-dried system. The Master's words are in place here, "God is not the God of the dead, but of the living" (Matt. 22 : 32 ; Mark 12 : 27).

in *deed* as well as in word. Besides his constant deeds of healing the body as well as the mind, by which he does reverence to the body so often despised by his would-be followers, and allows no place in his thought for an ascetic dualism, compare his many utterances and his frequent companying with the socially outcast and despised — with publican and harlot. “The Son of man is come to save that which was lost ” (Matt. 18 : 11); “They that are whole need not a physician, but they that are sick ” (Luke 5 : 31); “He hath anointed me to preach the Gospel to the poor” (Luke 4 : 18), etc.

The harmonious integrity of his character and the utterly unselfish and beneficent nature of his personal activity, both as teacher and healer, alone suffice to elevate Jesus’ influence far above that of all other social reformers without recourse to an emphasis on the physically miraculous incidents of his career for evidence of his supremacy. Plato and Sir Thomas More sketched for us ideals of the social state; but Jesus left a concrete personal embodiment of the ideal man living out perfectly the life of social duty and of human fellowship in such a manner that men are thereby stimulated, not indeed to imitate him in a slavish and external fashion, but to work out their lives freely in his spirit.

## CHAPTER IX

### JESUS CHRIST AND OTHER FOUNDERS OF RELIGIONS

#### (1) *Personality and the History of Religion*

WE have seen that the influence exerted by Jesus on man's ideas of God, and on their feeling of his relationship to the human family, is vitally and inextricably bound up with his own personality. We have seen that it was not through systematic theological definitions and proofs or chains of philosophical argument that Jesus wrought such a tremendous transformation in man's sense of the Divine. It was through the total and integral impress of his personality that Jesus wrought this great change in his own disciples' feelings in regard to God; and it is by this same personal impress that he continues to have a vital influence on man's convictions concerning his own position in the universe and the attitude of the Universal Spirit toward him.

We may now ask what is the secret of this personal influence? Why should the influence of Jesus be so much more pervasive and profound than the reasonings of philosophers and theologians? This problem is bound up with the ultimate secret of personality,

and we cannot dissect the living personality into elements; we cannot formulate it in general terms. We can only *feel* in ourselves and note in others *the influence* of this vital, integral, personal life. It is life speaking to life, heart communing with heart, and indeed the influence and relationship is here the same in kind as that which obtains in the relationships of human persons. We can never give a generalized logical statement or exact analysis of the way in which an individual in whom we repose confidence, who awakens trust, admiration, and love, affects us. The direct relationship between living persons is the integral reaction of the soul known as *faith*. We may give reasons after the experience, we may enumerate the qualities of a person which make appeal to us. But, before we give these reasons or make this enumeration, we must first have had the living experience — must first have taken the attitude of faith or confidence called forth in us by the direct stimulus and attraction of another living spirit. Hence we cannot state in logical terms or express in a neat formula the influence of any worthy personality, much less of the personality of Jesus.

Nevertheless a general consideration of the historical functions of personality will throw some light on the significance of Jesus' personality as a factor in the spiritual history of man. Human civilization is a *social development*. History, considered as the evolution of man's entire nature, is the sphere of the growth of *culture* through the organiza-



tion of society. In and through history and society man is transformed from a merely natural being — a creature governed by random impulse and merely sensuous desires — into a spiritual self, with power of rational self-control and self-direction. All the higher factors of culture (by which I mean the whole inner or spiritual side of civilization) are expressions of man's spiritual activity, in contradistinction to his merely sensuous or natural and animal life. I may remind the reader here that recent psychological studies have further borne out the view, which had already found philosophical expression in the works of Herder, Kant, and, more especially, of Hegel, that man becomes aware of his own nature as a self-conscious spirit and realizes the potentialities of this spiritual nature through participation in the common or social life of culture, and further, that the social culture of a given time or period is always the resultant of historical forces.<sup>1</sup>

Now, society is constituted by relations between persons. No society can be regarded as alive and actual in which persons do not enter into vital relationships with one another. This is as true of the state as it is of a trades union, as true of the school as it is of the church, as true of the community as it is of the family. Of course the smaller the group, the more constant and intimate the relationships. Hence

<sup>1</sup> Such psychological studies are to be found in Josiah Royce's *Studies of Good and Evil* and J. M. Baldwin's *Social and Ethical Interpretations of Mental Development*.

the relationships of individuals are much closer and more influential in the family than in the state.

Society is the living matrix or culture-atmosphere of the spiritual life of man. But society undergoes a *historical* development and the various forms or aspects of the social-culture life of man, viz. the creations and spirit of *art*, in architecture, sculpture, painting, music, and poetry, the theories and applications of *scientific thought*, the accepted *moral ideas* and the higher *ethical ideals* that influence a community, all these aspects and influences in the social life of human culture are developed and made effective through the *action* of leading persons. It is through personal influence and reaction that æsthetic, scientific, and moral ideals prevail in the social life. It is chiefly through the influence of great personalities that existing scientific theories and political, social, æsthetic, and moral ideals are originated, enforced, and transformed, that new ones arise and become efficient factors in the life of culture. It is sufficient in this connection to remind the reader of the influence of Plato, Aristotle, Descartes, Spinoza, Kant, and Hegel in philosophy; of Kepler, Newton, and Darwin in science: of Pericles, Julius Cæsar, Frederick the Great, William Pitt, the elder, Napoleon I., etc., in politics; of Socrates and the Hebrew prophets, of Confucius and Luther and Savonarola, in the sphere of individual and social morality. The individual Personality is, in every sphere of man's activity, a great *historical cause*.

And the ideas and ideals of the leading individuals, to become effective, must call forth reactions from the multitude, the moving mass of the social life. It is fashionable nowadays to say that a new movement is due to the *general conditions of the time*, that progress in science, social organization, art, and morals results from the convergence of general tendencies that in some mysterious way arise and spread over human society. But, in truth, these so-called general tendencies must exist and act in a number of living individuals if they are to mean anything. And great original movements never come to a head in human history until the creative personality is found, the leader, the discoverer, the revealer.

All this is true in a preëminent degree in religion — the highest expression of man's life as a historical being. The most vital, enduring, and universal influences in religion have all irradiated from great personalities. What are known as the *universal* or *ethical religions* — those that make appeal to some ethical and spiritual principle or need that exists universally in mankind — have all been founded by great personalities. Judaism was founded by Moses and developed by the great prophets of Israel. Mohammedanism, devoid though it be of original elements, made its universal appeal through the influence of its founder. The primal vitality of Buddhism lay mainly in the influence of Gotama Buddha. And this relation between the Personal

Founder and his historical work and influence is true in a supreme degree of Christianity.

Of course, the personal founders of great religions have always taught and acted primarily with reference to the religious conditions of their own time and people. There has been always a local and temporal element in their work. Since human personality is developed and lived out under specific social and historical conditions, the founder of a new religion must find a vital point of contact with the moral and religious traditions and social conditions of his own day and his own people. His universal appeal must find its way through a particular set of national and local circumstances, his eternal message must be revealed under temporal conditions. But these particular local and temporal conditions may be, and indeed always have been in the history of religion, *typical* of some phase or aspect of man's spiritual growth. And so, dealing in an original manner with *typical* or generally significant spiritual conditions of life, the ethical and religious teachings of Moses and the Hebrew prophets, of Mohammed and Buddha, have gained universal significance.

One universally significant feature of the work of the personal founders of religion has been their *simplification* and *unification* of existing spiritual ideas. Buddha simplified the world-weary pessimistic pantheism, with its speculative negation of the individual, which underlay the confused religious and speculative ideas of the Hindu. Mohammed

simplified the confused polytheism and spiritism of the Arabs. The Hebrew prophets gave grand and simple expression to the religious background and basis of social ethics. And, lastly, Jesus Christ, in freeing men from the burdensome and elaborate legalism of post-exilic Judaism, simplified, while he deepened and sweetened, men's sense of their relationship to God. He freed the sublime ethical elements in Hebrew religion from their narrow national limitations and gave them universal expression. And hence, in the religion of Jesus, the appeal is made to the individual, the single person is redeemed and uplifted irrespective of race, community, and circumstances.<sup>1</sup>

The personal founder of a religion, then, speaks directly under the influence of and with reference to local and temporal historical conditions. But the test of his abiding influence lies in his *personal revelation* of the universal and eternal in the spiritual capacity and aspiration of man.

## (2) *Jesus, Mohammed, and Buddha in History*

At the present time there seems to be only one religion, centring in a great historical personality, that can claim, with any show of reason, to be a rival of Christianity, and that is Buddhism. Mohammedanism may be left out of account. Although a

<sup>1</sup> I am indebted for suggestions in regard to the process of simplification in religious progress to W. Bousset, *Das Wesen der Religion*.

universal or world-religion, it is not now, and apparently has never been, an *originative* and *creative force* in the spiritual progress of civilization. Able to unify and absorb scattered tribes into empires, able to assimilate a foreign culture, Mohammedan civilization lacks spontaneity and, except where stimulated by western influences, as in Egypt and India to-day, its development is soon arrested and decay sets in. The weakness and the power of Mohammedanism as a moral force both lie in its elaborated *legalism*. It sprang full armed from its founder as a fixed code of social ethics, law, or jurisprudence, and politics. It is a rigid, inelastic system that does not give free play and stimulus to the spirit of personality. Consequently, wide-reaching and beneficent though its influence may have been, in uplifting races from utter barbarism and crude superstition, from fetichism and polytheism in religion, from disorder, confusion and rapine, into social order and some degree of stability and equity in the administration of justice, and into a worship of and submission to the will of one God that develops self-reliance and self-respect in the believer, Mohammedanism everywhere has stopped at the establishment of fixed social order and political unity. It has never gone forward to create a high type of spiritual individualism in social life, morals, and religion.

Nowhere on Mohammedan ground has the moral and legal equality of men and women been recog-

nized. Nowhere has Islam originated a genuine democracy. Nowhere has it given birth to that full recognition of the freedom and worth of the individual personality, which is the most valuable principle of western civilization. Consequently we find in Islam no great creative culture work like western science, free government, or social democracy. Islam for a time assimilated and imitated Greek science and philosophy, but it made no great original addition thereto. (It is not to be forgotten that the brilliant Caliphates of Bagdad and Cordova which transmitted Greek learning to the Christian Middle Ages were founded on tyranny and terrorism, assassination and oppression. Harun al Raschid destroyed to a man his great ministers, the Barmecides.)

Mohammed, its founder, was undoubtedly an honest, earnest, and deeply religious man with many fine traits of character; affectionate, loyal to his friends, compassionate toward the poor, of great moral courage, etc. But his character deteriorated with worldly success. Whereas at Mecca, when undergoing persecution, he said that religion should not be imposed by force, after he had become powerful at Medina he propagated his religion by the sword and gained his marvellous successes by a singular and shrewd intermingling of religious zeal with promises of earthly gains and sensuous delights for the warriors who survived the field of battle; and for those who perished, still greater bliss in Paradise, in green valleys with rivers flowing through

them and goodly numbers of houris to delight them.<sup>1</sup> Beginning with the proclamation of an ardent monotheism presumably derived from Jewish sources and well-fitted to uplift his countrymen from their base polytheism, Mohammed developed into a conqueror, statesman, and legislator. Herein lies the secret at once of his success and failure. His empire is bound up with a particular and inferior phase of civilization. His ethics have many fine features in their insistence on justice to widow and orphans, simplicity of life, almsgiving, patience, abstention from gambling, etc.; but they sanction the principle of retaliation of injuries and their conception of woman is low. Above all, the spiritual and the ceremonial are confused. Prayer and almsgiving are rigorous matters of ceremonial piety. In short, Mohammed's ethics are legalistic, formal, without inherent power of progress. Church and state are one, law and ceremony and right conduct are not distinguished. Scope is not given for the development of *inwardness*, of a free and rational spiritual life. From Mohammed was hidden the secret of true ethical progress — the Divine Sonship of man grounded on God's infinite Love. Where law and spirit, the outer and the inner, legal institution and personality are confused, the mainspring of the higher movements of civilization is absent. Syed

<sup>1</sup> Modern Mohammedan rationalism explains these away as purely symbolical. But they are too frequently reiterated in the Koran and too consistent with the Prophet's practice to be so easily shelved.



Ameer Ali says in his *Life of Mohammed*<sup>1</sup> that the "work of Jesus was left unfinished. It was reserved for another teacher to *systematize the laws* (italics mine) of morality" (p. 185). Herein this interesting advocate of Islam shows his entire misconception of the meaning of Jesus' work, a misconception which is indeed shared by some Christians. Jesus never aimed to give a *system of laws* for morality, much less for ceremonial piety. And, again, the same author says, in the fact of Mohammed's "whole work being achieved during his lifetime lies his distinctive superiority over prophets, sages, and philosophers of other times and countries" (p. 150). On the contrary from the standpoint of the philosophy of historical progress, of the growth of culture in inwardness and power through the movement of personality, this fact is precisely evidence of the vast inferiority of Mohammed's work to that of Jesus. The full accomplishment and the all-comprehensiveness of his work mean, in Mohammed's case, a limit set on development, through the confusion of the local and temporal with that spirit in man which moves ever toward a higher perfection, *i.e.* Mohammedanism confused the personal and spiritual with the legal and external elements of civilization.

Indeed the entire ethical and religious code of Mohammed seems but a recrudescence and application of Judaism with the greater prophetic elements left out. His ethical system falls below the teachings

<sup>1</sup> London, Williams and Norgate, 1873.

of Isaiah and Amos, Hosea and Jeremiah. His knowledge of Christianity was evidently derived from very distorted sources; indeed, some of the stories related about Jesus in the Koran are to be found in apocryphal gospels of the Infancy, notably the so-called first gospel of the Infancy, first translated into English by Henry Sike in 1697.<sup>1</sup>

The only remaining world-religion that offers serious rivalry to Christianity is Buddhism. Notwithstanding the central place occupied in the purer forms of Buddhism by the personality of Gotama Buddha, it is extremely difficult, owing to the lack in Hindu literature of that historical sense for individuality, for the unique lineaments, deeds, and fates of personalities which distinguishes western literature, to construct from the maze of tradition a clear picture of the personality, work, and teaching of Gotama Buddha. Herman Oldenberg,<sup>2</sup> has clearly shown, however, that such a personage must have existed. The traditions present, as Oldenberg says, in Gotama's case, a type of ancient Buddhist life; now since this typical or unindividual quality is at once so characteristic of Indian life, and, since the period between Buddha and the fixing of the tradition or the canon of Buddhist scriptures

<sup>1</sup> My chief authorities for Mohammedanism are the Koran, Sir William Muir's *Life of Mahomet* (London, 1894), the above-mentioned work of Ameer Ali, Bosworth Smith's *Mohammed*, the articles in the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, etc.

<sup>2</sup> *Buddha, his Life his Doctrine his Order*, English translation, London, 1882.

was entirely deficient in minds great enough to give a new direction to the great movement, we are entitled to assume that we have at least a fairly accurate account of his work and teaching, although he may have had many striking traits which are lost through the absence in the Hindu mind of a feeling for the individual and historical.

Moreover, when we approach the Buddhist tradition in this way, we find a new and fairly consistent ethical or practical teaching that is nevertheless in harmony with the impersonal pantheism and abstract intellectualism so characteristic of pre-Buddhistic Hindu thought, *i.e.* of Brahmanism as it is found in the *Vedas* and *Upanishads*. Buddhism is a normal and legitimate product of Vedantic philosophy.<sup>1</sup> Buddha's career began, like that of

<sup>1</sup> The fundamental thought of this philosophy is that the only reality is the world-soul (Brahma). Brahma is in every soul or *âtman* and the reality of the soul is not that of a separate individuality or personality. All that appears to separate the soul from Brahma is illusion. Brahma is beyond consciousness as this exists in man. Brahma is the indifference-point of self and world, the abstract unity of subject and object. In Brahma all separate selves and particular existences collapse into a featureless, formless, indescribable unity. The goal of human existence is to be merged in an all-one in which all distinctions are lost. It may not be amiss to remark here on the resemblance between this ultimate and Absolute of ancient Hindu speculation and the Absolute of Spinoza, of Schelling (which Hegel described as shot out of a pistol) and the unknowable Reality of Herbert Spencer. We are often told that the Hindus are our masters in metaphysics. If the only logical goal of metaphysics be a denial of individuality, which involves the assumption that man's history and the manifold activities of human culture are vain illusions, this is true. But

the traditional Hindu mendicant monk who sought illumination and salvation, by withdrawal from the world, by renunciation of social ties, by ascetic practices, and by meditation and speculation. Buddha's first departure from the traditional way was his discovery that neither by self-mortification nor pure speculation could one attain deliverance. The distinguishing characteristic of ancient Brahmanism was that one attained the goal of salvation by an intellectual process that ended in complete abstraction from concrete experience and individuality. This withdrawal from actualities into a realm of

if metaphysics must be based on historical experience and draw its inspiration from the entire social and spiritual life of human culture, then the Hindus are emphatically *not* our masters. At the risk of evoking a sneer from the devotees of an abstract absolute, I venture to assert that genuine and indigenous western metaphysics, founded on the experiences of Greek and Christian civilization, and drawing its materials and inspiration from the development of free individuality and democracy, has *nothing* to learn from Hindu speculation. The whole future of western civilization demands the repudiation of the monastic intellectualism, the impersonal pantheism, of ancient India. (India to-day is being revived by the touch of another and alien life.) There can be no compromise between the democratic and historical philosophy of the West, carrying inductive science in its train, and the philosophy of an abstract absolute, whether presented in ancient or modern guise. Christianity and the democratic state stand or fall with the victory or defeat of a philosophy and theology based on inductive science and history.

The leading authority for ancient Hindu philosophy is Paul Deussen, *Allgemeine Geschichte der Philosophie*, Band I. and II. Volume II., 'The Philosophy of the Upanishads,' is now translated into English, I believe.

pure thought is characteristic, too, of the final goal of Buddha's teaching. But the latter has ethical elements of which previous Hindu religious thought was partly void, and it is the ethical and practical side that is of interest to us in comparison with the teaching of Jesus. I shall do no more here than make a very brief comparison. For the filling out of this outline the reader must consult the standard works in the history of religion. The resemblances between the career of Gotama Buddha and of Jesus Christ are so very obvious as to lie on the surface of comparative history.

They both devote themselves to showing men a way of *redemption* from the ills of life. Through the teachings of both there runs a sharp contrast between the merely worldly life and the life of spiritual self-control and peace. In the way of redemption laid down by both there is involved as the primary condition of salvation an overcoming of the world and of the lower self.

Buddha, like Christ, demands purity of heart. Buddha teaches that the way to the cessation of suffering is the treading of the eightfold path of right belief, right aspiration, right conduct, right means of livelihood, right endeavour, right memory, right desire. Buddha lays down five rules binding on all adherents, monastic and lay alike. These rules are, (1) not to kill any living being, (2) not to take that which is not given, (3) to refrain from adultery, (4) to speak no untruth, (5) to abstain from intoxi-

cating liquors. The emphasis on inward purity or rightness of desires and rightness of insight reminds one sharply of Jesus' words, "Blessed are the pure in heart," and of that emphasis on inwardness and genuineness that characterize his whole teaching.

But when we look deeper, we shall find the differences still more striking than the resemblances. The basis of Buddha's teaching is *absolute pessimism*. *Life is suffering* and it is by an *intellectual insight* that man is to be redeemed, not from *sin* or *selfishness*, but from *suffering*. And the root of his doctrine of salvation lies in the four noble truths: (1) That suffering is the clinging to existence. (2) That the cause of suffering is desire or appetite. (3) That the cessation of suffering is to be gained through the abolition of desire. (4) That this abolition is to be obtained through the eightfold path already mentioned.

The secret of Buddha's personal influence consisted in his sympathy with human suffering, and his resolve to remove it. *But his method of salvation is essentially negative*. It consists in the absolute denial of individual existence, the negation of the individual or personal soul. All existence is transitory and evil and, because of the endless chain of causal connection in the world, in which the individual soul is enmeshed, there can be no salvation except by the absolute abolition of the individual. Individuality is to be rooted out by the total abolition of desire. But Gotama accepts the Brahmanic

doctrine of Samsara and of Karma according to which the individual is dependent in character and destiny on the deeds of former individuals, and is the reincarnation, not indeed, as Buddha conceives the doctrine, of a previous single individual, but of a group of qualities of previous individuals.<sup>1</sup> Buddha is a nihilist in regard to the soul and to all individuality. There is no soul. "Constituent parts alone roll on" and the grasping of the constituent elements of being means the cessation of desire and of rebirth.<sup>2</sup> The consideration of all elements of being as *not an ego* is one of the three starting-points of deliverance.

The goal *Nirvana*, although hard to describe or conceive and presumably left purposely vague in Buddha's own teaching, is certainly the abolition of individuality. Nirvana is a state of desiring nothing and thinking nothing attained by renunciation and meditation. If it be not the negation of all being, it is certainly the negation of desire and activity, and it is difficult to see what meaning, if any, can be attached to consciousness or spiritual being when the individual life has faded away in

<sup>1</sup> Rhys-Davids, *Buddhism, Hibbert Lectures*, Lect. III.

<sup>2</sup> H. C. Warren, *Buddhism in Translation*, pp. 333-334, 346 and 377. Buddha is said to have repeatedly taught that the cause of rebirth was ignorance and the accompanying desire for individuality. The "constituent parts" or "elements," Sankhâras (translated in German '*Gestaltungen*'), are the unceasing chain of causes and effects, or actions and consequences, in which an individual is enmeshed until he overcomes desire and gains insight into the impermanency of being.

the absolute All which is itself devoid of positive quality or activity.<sup>1</sup>

*Buddhism is essentially negative.* It denies the reality of the individual spirit as well as of the world. Its basis is absolute pessimism. It compasses the redemption of the individual through stripping off individuality. The ego is freed from suffering by ceasing to be an ego, by denying the world and learning to regard it as non-existent. Its ethics are monastic and speculative. Flight from the world is the

<sup>1</sup> Buddha seems, so far as one can judge from translations, to have declined to decide or pronounce whether Nirvâna or Nibbâna was a state of being or non-being. But it seems clear that it is a total negation of personality. The soul "is only a heap of Sankhâras: here there is not a person." Oldenberg, *op. cit.*, p. 270. As, perhaps, an accommodation to the lay mind, Buddha does not categorically assert that Nirvâna is the utter extinction of consciousness. Rhys-Davids (*Buddhism, Hibbert Lectures for 1881*, and *American Lectures on Buddhism*) gives it a positive character. He calls it simply rest, calm, the peace that passeth understanding. I do not find that any other notable western scholar shares this view. Perhaps Oldenberg's statement is the nearest approach we can make to the original meaning. "For the Buddhist the words 'there is an uncreated' merely signify that the created can free himself from the curse of being created—there is a path from the world of the created out into dark endlessness. Does the path lead to a new existence? Does it lead into the Nothing? The Buddhist creed rests in delicate equipoise between the two. The longing of the heart that craves the eternal has not nothing, and yet the thought has not a something, which it might firmly grasp. . . . Farther off the idea of the endless, the eternal could not withdraw itself from belief than it has done here, where, like a gentle flutter on the point of merging in the Nothing, it threatens to evade the gaze" (*op. cit.* p. 284).



goal and, although sympathy, helpfulness, and tenderness are enjoined, it is in a spirit of comparative coldness. There is no flaming passion for these things such as breathes through the New Testament; and, indeed, there could not be, since all active well-doing is in Buddhism only preparatory and preliminary to the higher stage of withdrawal from the world. The Bodhisâtva, *i.e.* the seeker after Buddhahood, the "Buddha-elect," will practise these active virtues, but the Buddha who has attained the state of pure contemplation and peace is beyond them. The consequence of this attitude is the slight value attached to social relationships and moral activities in the world of men. There is an absence of a positive feeling of obligation, a contempt for work, for woman, and for all the conditions of the earthly life.<sup>1</sup>

Work in the world of men and the morals that develop therefrom lie far out on the periphery, in the realm of matters that are well-nigh indifferent. The seeker after enlightenment leaves these morals behind him, since he passes far beyond the life with which they are concerned. Hence Buddhism as such is devoid of any principle of *progress*. It has no real history and no room for the positive growth of the individual person, in depth of life and width of social relationship.

This negative relation of Buddhism to work in

<sup>1</sup> Edv. Lehmann in Chantepie de la Saussaye, *Lehrbuch der Religionsgeschichte*, Zweite auflage, Bd. II., p. 98.

the world, to social life and the manifold activities of civilization, accounts for the readiness with which, in the course of its spread among the peoples of the Far East, it accepted alien moral elements and adopted, without transforming, indigenous religious practices and beliefs; and hence, in consequence, for its failure to preserve its original and distinctive characteristics in the face of firmly entrenched national ethical and religious systems. Buddhist India succumbed to Mohammedan onslaughts. Buddhism plays a very feeble rôle in Hindu culture and religion to-day. It has been reabsorbed into the speculative pantheism from which it originated. In the popular life it has vanished to give place to an animistic polytheism. Buddhism has almost totally lost its original features in the Lamaism of Thibet and even in Nepal, its original home.<sup>1</sup> Almost all that remains is the world-weary monasticism. Nirvana fades into the distance or is treated as an illusion. Here is an elaborate hierarchy and ceremonial with gods galore and a material Heaven and Hell. In Ceylon and to a greater degree in Burma, if Mr. H. Fielding may be trusted,<sup>2</sup> there is a strong leaven of original Buddhism.

<sup>1</sup> Northern Buddhism is based on the so-called Mahayâna or Greater Vehicle, a complex blending of fantastic metaphysics and speculations upon all sorts of things with magical ceremonies and the apotheosis of Buddha. Buddha is made the head of a pantheon, and the dividing line between monks and laity becomes indistinct or disappears.

<sup>2</sup> *The Soul of a People.*

The Buddhism of China,<sup>1</sup> with its worship of relics and idols, its goddess of mercy, Kwan-yin, the incarnation of a Bodhisâtva or Buddha-elect, Avalokitesvara by name; its great god Amitâbha or Amita, the eternal and infinitely glorious, who is lord of the western paradise; its material hell before which Dante's *Inferno* pales into mildness, would surely not be recognized at all by Gotama. Its repetition of magic formulas by which the gate of paradise is opened, the easy conditions for the use of this master-key, the strict book-keeping of the faithful with his gods, etc., etc.; all these things are the opposite of Gotama's method of self-salvation by sheer philosophical reflection and the extinction of desire.

In China Buddhism, already far removed from its original simplicity, came in contact with a long-established code of social ethics, whose fundamental feature was filial piety and whose whole system embraced only the five mundane social relationships of Emperor and subject, father and son, husband and wife, younger brother and elder brother, friend and friend; a system admirably adapted to preserve in harmonious equipoise a social and political code of venerable antiquity and woven into the very life-blood of the people; but a system which gave no stimulus to progress and offered no scope to individuality, since in it the individual person is swal-

<sup>1</sup> Compare S. Beal's *Buddhism in China*. Other references will be found in Chantepie de la Saussaye, *op. cit.*, Vol. II., p. 113 ff.

lowed up in the social relations of family, clan, community, and nation.<sup>1</sup> In China, the family and even the clan and community are responsible for the misdeeds of individual members. Higher officials are responsible for the misdemeanours of lower officials, etc. In fact somebody else seems to be always responsible. Confucianism is a system of purely utilitarian social and civic ethics. It formulates and codifies the principles of social life indigenous to an ancient and isolated civilization. It is clear, practical, prosaic, and unyielding.<sup>2</sup> It sets up no ideal of a spiritual perfection that lies beyond the routine of moral custom and convention; it stirs up no feeling of transcendent personal responsibilities. It lacks entirely the element of aspiration and personal progress which comes only with the faith in an infinitely exalted and perfect Divine Being in whom resides that principle of personality of which the possibility is latent in the individual man.

It is true that Lao-Tsze, contemporaneous with Confucius, taught the golden rule; and it is very significant, when taken in connection with his elevated ethical teaching, that Lao-Tsze emphasized the dependence of all things on a transcendent Reason; but this "Reason" or "Way" was abstract and impersonal. It did not stimulate the individual

<sup>1</sup> Compare Williams, *The Middle Kingdom*; Douglas, *Society in China*; Smith, *Chinese Characteristics*, etc.

<sup>2</sup> Compare Douglas, *Confucianism and Taoism*, etc.

with a quickening and encouraging sense of kinship with the Perfect in the very midst of imperfection. Consequently, Lao-Tsze's teaching was devoid of any power of appeal to men in general. Modern Taoism has nothing in common with the teaching of the "old philosopher." It is a system of fetichism, magic, and divination. Buddhism, with its vague aspiration and its promise of a realm of eternal peace beyond the ordinary affairs of life in the world and society, with its promise of redemption into Nirvana, spread in China because it, in a measure, satisfied the inexpugnable longing for an ideal and transcendent realm of existence which one finds everywhere in the human race. Those who were dissatisfied with the outward show of things, with the conventional round of commonplace existence, and those who were weary of the struggle of life, sought satisfaction by a renunciation which carried them away from self and the world and promised absolute peace. But, since this peace was attained by complete denial of the world and withdrawal from the common activities of life, Buddhism is in China, as everywhere, at best an unhistorical and unsocial mysticism that is powerless to influence society at large and that initiates no new movements of civilization and gives no fresh impulses toward progress in humane culture. For such new impulses originate always in the *spirit of the individual* working in society. Where the social and historical principle of personality is ignored, no constant progress

is possible. And the growth of humane culture at its highest terms, *i.e.* where it ceases to be impelled merely by physical constraints, by the needs and appetites of the physical and biological order, depends on the feeling and conviction of the inherent and infinite significance of personality.

A great and ancient empire like China, isolated from the forces which stir up and strengthen this sense of the infinite meaning of personality, and, by its inertia, resisting and absorbing the inundations of barbarians, in the natural course of events arrives at a reasonably stable social order. It develops the arts and industries so far as to minister to the demands of natural existence; and, then, stands still or retrogrades for want of a transcendent moral or spiritual impulse working in the individual, and through him on society.<sup>1</sup>

It is sometimes argued that Japan owes her greatness to Buddhism because civilization came in with Buddhism from China. But it is forgotten that it was Buddhism plus Confucianism that brought the rudiments of civilization to Japan. The latter adopted Confucian social ethics. Under the influence of the long period of feudalism in Japan *loyalty* was inserted as the keystone of conduct in the

<sup>1</sup> It is the well-nigh unanimous testimony of careful students of Chinese civilization that the administration of law in China is very corrupt, that intellectual and moral life there is wrapped in immemorial stagnation; and no purely native impulses towards progress are discernible.

ethics of the Samurai in the place of *filial piety*,<sup>1</sup> although the latter virtue was given almost equal prominence and, indeed, the absolute loyalty and obedience of the warrior to his Lord was a form of filial piety.

Chinese Buddhism, entering Japan, found there a people in the stage of primitive civilization, indeed almost in barbarism. Already a fully organized and equipped ecclesiastical system which had entered China, bringing with it Hindu letters, art, and speculation, and which had further adopted into its own system the moral and social features of Chinese civilization, Buddhism introduced art and letters into Japan. It promoted the establishment of a literary language, developed an ecclesiastical architecture, fostered the love of nature, and, to some extent, mitigated the horrors of war and softened manners in a primitive people. But the activities of culture, planted and promoted in Japan by Chinese ecclesiastical Buddhism, were not, it is almost needless to say, the offspring of Buddhism in its original form. These were products of national genius adopted by Buddhism as it moved along through India, China, Corea, and Japan. An analogy may be drawn between the course of Buddhism

<sup>1</sup> Compare Nitobe, *Bushido*; Griffis, *The Religions of Japan*; Okakura-Yoshisaburo, *The Spirit of Japan*; Knox, *Japanese Life in Town and Country* and *The Development of Religion in Japan*; Hearn, *Japan, an Interpretation*; Chamberlin, *Things Japanese*.

as a civilizing agency and that of Christianity, which, in its course, adopted Greek and Roman culture and suffered great transformations in the process. But the analogy is very imperfect. Christianity profoundly modified, indeed, one may say it gave an entirely new stamp to, western culture. This work of progressively transforming the bases of culture, Christianity still carries on and will continue in the future. Not so with Buddhism. Entering Japanese life and carrying with it the external apparatus of civilization, — letters and art, — it did not transform the heart of Japan. In a thousand ways it submitted to the control of the native impulses of the people. It entered political life and became for a considerable time a powerful social and even military influence. But it did not produce a radical ethical transformation. It did not build hospitals for human beings or organize charity. It did not greatly elevate the position of woman. It did not free the individual from the trammels of a communal life in which his independent worth and dignity were not recognized. Japanese feudalism and Samurai ethics are not pure and legitimate products of Buddhism. But if they were, that would not constitute a recommendation of Buddhism to the modern world. Much as one may admire the spirit of absolute loyalty and obedience to family, clan, nation, and emperor which is embodied in so many Japanese tales, that is not the spirit which makes for genuine human progress to-day. The future of humanity



belongs to those for whom the individual soul is sacred beyond all political and social conventions and ties. Not until there is awakened in the spirit of man a sense of his infinite worth and of his infinite responsibility to God (these are but two aspects of the same truth) can civilization make sure and uninterrupted progress. The fuller and richer development of society depends on the development of the individual life.

In Japan, Buddhism adopted the ancestral faith — the gods of Shinto — as avatars of Buddha. It split up into a multitude of sects, many of which seem to have been nothing more than forms of polytheistic animism and fetichism, while others have developed pantheistic and mystical tendencies such as we find in Buddhist sects in other countries.<sup>1</sup> But I cannot find any sufficient evidence that the moral code of the Samurai owes much to Buddhism except an accentuation of that power of passive self-control and stoical endurance in the face of death which was indeed required by the supreme virtue of loyalty — a virtue that, on its negative side, involves a disregard for the worth of the individual person. For the few speculative and world-weary spirits there was an esoteric mysticism, for the many a crude medley

<sup>1</sup> Compare Griffis, *Religions of Japan*, and A. Lloyd, *Developments of Japanese Buddhism*, in Proceedings of Asiatic Society of Japan, Vol. XXII., Pt. 3. I regret not to have been able to procure a copy of B. Nanjio's *Twelve Japanese Buddhist Sects*, a very important work on the subject.

of ancestral and spirit worship, magic, and divination, with morals in part derived from Confucianism, and in part developed indigenously. There have occurred in the history of Japanese Buddhism reformatory movements of a lofty character, such as *Shinshu*, which teaches salvation by faith in Amida Buddha, emphasizes the value of family life, denies any especial value to the monastic life, allows the eating of meat, and forbids prayer for temporal blessings; the *Zen*, or meditative sect, which lays all stress on contemplation; and that of *Nichiren* who preached in the thirteenth century, with fiery energy, an eclecticism which claimed to unify all previous teachings and to show that fervent faith, contemplation, asceticism, etc., are all imperfect ways toward the Perfect Enlightenment in which is seen the identity of Buddha with all living beings.<sup>1</sup>

It is evident that of these three great sects only the Zen<sup>2</sup> is akin to original Hindu Buddhism. The Shinshu is far removed therefrom. Enough has been said to illustrate the constant and great transformations that Buddhism has undergone in the Far East.

It is quite evident that in Japan Buddhism has not conquered Shinto and that it did not create the

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Lloyd thinks that the Tathâgata of Original Enlightenment, *i.e.* the Perfect Buddha, is identical with God (*op. cit.*, p. 442). If so, it is God pantheistically conceived.

<sup>2</sup> The Soto sub-sect of the Zen adds scholarship and research to contemplation.

ethics of the Samurai class. Here, as in China, it bent to fit the national characteristics. Interesting though they be, Buddhist reform movements in Japan have seemingly been influential only as they have moved away from original Buddhism. The Zen system, with its auto-hypnotic contemplation of vacuity until the mind reaches a state of absolute self-annihilation of thought, perception, and will,<sup>1</sup> reminds one strongly of Hindu quietism and mysticism. One Japanese writer<sup>2</sup> attributes great social and moral influence to this school, but probably greatly exaggerates on this point. I do not find that any other native or foreign writer of note agrees in attributing such a profound and widespread influence to the Zen sect. Its doctrine of contemplative "abstraction," or Dhyâna, is certainly not provocative of a positive activity in the moral relations of society.

Recognizing the civilizing influences that Buddhism has exerted in the development of the Japanese, it still remains an open question how far the original features of Buddhism have been productive of a positive and progressive moralization of social activities. Japanese authorities are not themselves agreed as to the extent and depth of Buddhist influence. One foreign writer<sup>3</sup> indeed asserts that

<sup>1</sup> Okakura-Yoshisaburo, *The Japanese Spirit*, p. 74.

<sup>2</sup> Mr. Okakura, *op. cit.*

<sup>3</sup> Professor G. W. Knox, *Japanese Life in Town and Country*, p. 65.

"in all the sects . . . the noble eightfold path has been largely overgrown, and the ethical influence is inconsiderable." The most progressive sect, *Shin-shu*, is perhaps farthest removed from original Buddhism. Indeed it is strangely like a diluted form of evangelical protestantism.

Popular Buddhism accommodates itself pretty completely to the temper, impulses, and customs of the people. Philosophical Buddhism runs into a vague subjective idealism, a dreamy pantheism and acosmism. The world and the self fade away into the Inane. This evanescence may bring peace of a kind, but it is not the kind of peace that a strong personality in touch with western life will crave.<sup>1</sup>

So far as modern Buddhism has been faithful to its original principles, then, it has developed a monasticism for the world-weary, a passive unhistorical and impersonal mysticism for the contemplative spirits. Nowhere in its missionary career does it appear to have radically changed the character of a people or to have seriously modified an indigenous system of social ethics. It has contributed but little that is positive and creative to the activities of culture. It is true we find a Buddhist art, in sculpture, architecture, etc., everywhere. But these are due chiefly to the natural artistic impulses of the various peoples, carried forward by organized Buddhism in its career as a missionary and institutional

<sup>1</sup> On the whole subject of Buddhism and Japanese Life, compare further S. L. Gulick, *Evolution of the Japanese*.

religion. Buddhism has not developed experimental science nor produced a great social movement anywhere. Although appealing to man, irrespective of caste or training, it has never given rise to a genuine democracy. In truth it has never had a vigorous social message. By its very nature it could not be a militant and positive force in social morality. For, notwithstanding its denial of the reality of the individual, Buddhism is one-sidedly individualistic. Its aim is the expansion of self-consciousness to the point where it vanishes in the Absolute. But its conception of self-consciousness is abstract. The concrete and actual personality of man develops in and through the social life. Personality, in the western and Christian sense, grows and is defined through the activities of social life and culture. Individual Personality and Society move forward together. This thought is foreign to Buddhism. Just because it is a religion of *abstract self-consciousness* Buddhism fails to supply positive principles of social progress. Coming down from the heights of abstract contemplation, it may adopt or compromise with the established morality of a civilized nation such as China; but it introduces no new and great social principle such as the Christian principle of service.

The Buddhist doctrine of Karma maintains that the fruits or effects of all actions are rigidly conserved in the ever changing process of existence. The character and conditions of a man's present life depend on the effects of past actions; not, indeed,

of *this man's* past actions, but of past actions that conjointly cause him now to exist as this particular being. Karma is a kind of conservation, in the mass, of countless human actions. It is as if a biologist were to assert that heredity explained everything in human life. In truth, while this doctrine seems to approach modern science in teaching the universality of the law of cause and effect, it saps away the foundation of moral progress and paralyzes the individual will by teaching the ephemeral character of the present individual and his weakness in the face of the accumulated fruits of Karma now assembled in his character, and against which he can do little, if anything at all. This doctrine inspires resignation, not hope. It encourages flight from the world and its problems and renunciation of the self and its desires. It weakens personal responsibility and leaves no room for initiative. If the individual soul be but a collocation of elements, it can have as an individual no great issues. No great achievements are open to it, and its life dwindles in importance to a vanishing speck on the surface of the relentless blind ongoing of the fated elements of being. Being, ever impermanent, shifts its arrangements from moment to moment and individual souls arise in its ocean and fade away. To them comes no message, "My Father worketh hitherto and I work." There is only the blind ongoing of causes and effects. The order of Karma may be called a *moral order* by contrast with the notion of a physical order indifferent

to morality; but, where the individual soul is not itself a participant in cosmic issues, there is no moral or spiritual life in the Christian sense.

Now that East and West are met together and the world is becoming one, it will have to choose between the fatalism of Karma and the freedom of Christian personality, *i.e.* to choose between Hindu and Buddhist pessimism and negation of progress and the Christian principles of hope, of progress, and inextinguishable spiritual individuality.

The one great moral contribution of Buddhism to the life of Asia has been the spread of the spirit of mercy or compassion. It has softened in some degree the heart of Asia. It has mollified and restrained the cruelty and removed to some extent the callous indifference to human suffering of a continent where human life is cheap and plentiful, and on this score Buddhism should be accorded its full meed of praise. But, even in this respect, the influence of Buddha is far behind that of Jesus.<sup>1</sup> Buddha's gospel is one of egoistic self-redemption by reflection, Jesus' gospel one of redemption through vicarious suffering and social service. Institutions and activities for the relief of human suffering and distress in Buddhist Asia lag far behind those of Christian peoples. The extreme care of animals bestowed in Buddhist countries is not to the point, since this care results from the belief in the doctrine of transmigration. Mercy in Buddhism has a colour-

<sup>1</sup> Compare the Chinese indifference to suffering.

less passive quality. In St. Paul, as in his Master and the genuine disciple everywhere, it is a positive passion.<sup>1</sup> Christian love is positive and creative because it is founded on the faith in the value of the individual.

In short, Buddhism reaches the spiritual by *negation of the natural*; Jesus and his followers by *transformation of the natural*.

Redemption in Buddhism means in its final stage withdrawal from the activities of social and cultural life; redemption in the spirit of Jesus involves making these activities the means for the development of a spiritual personality. Buddhism is in essence unhistorical, unsocial; the teaching of Jesus is a positive transforming social force in the historical movement of humanity.

It is one thing for esoteric students with a speculative bent to find, in the unhistorical mysticism of Buddhism, a satisfaction of their own contemplative and quietistic tendencies. It is quite another thing to find a positive doctrine which impels social progress and gives an ethical impetus and basis for the activities of civilization by developing at once a deeper sense of the worth and reality of the individual life and of the moral relationships of individuals toward one another. These two aspects of culture must grow together. Buddhism ignores the former and hence can do but little for the latter. Hence it has no great message for western civilization,

<sup>1</sup> The great Christian hymn of love is 1 Cor. 13.



present and to come. The West may learn from the East the futility of a mad rush to get or to do something without first learning to possess one's inward self. The West may learn from the East the evils of a one-sided individualism and the littleness of worldly aims which do not satisfy the cravings of the spirit. But the West does not need to go to the East for the foundation-principles of spiritual culture. For the future of the culture-life of humanity does not lie with a social paternalism or communism in which the personal life is swamped, but with a free society of free persons springing out of a faith in the progressive principle of personality as grounded in the nature of God.

In truth the power of adaptation which Buddhism has shown seems to be due to its socially negative and unhistorical character; whereas the teachings of Jesus, notwithstanding the grievous perversions and misunderstandings from which they have again and again suffered, constitute a positive and impelling force in the work of civilization to-day.

Indeed, the progressive spiritual forces resident in his teaching and his personality must be those of a character universal in its ethical and spiritual quality — a character toward which human personality grows as in the process of civilization it gains fuller scope and realization.

Jesus shows the way to a positive world-transcending life in place of the world-denying flight to the

Inane of Buddhism. He teaches men to attain a spiritual personality, salvation, and communion with the Highest, by *overcoming* the world, and through active coöperation and communion with their fellows.

## CHAPTER X

### THE FINAL SIGNIFICANCE OF THE PERSONALITY OF JESUS CHRIST

THE gospel of Jesus has again and again in the creative periods of Christian history proved its renovating power and displayed the inspiration and scope it gives to the personal life of man. Jesus' significance for the soul is constantly being rediscovered — by the mediæval mystics,<sup>1</sup> at the Reformation, in the nineteenth century, etc., etc. In his vital and continuing relation to the *historical and spiritual development of man* Jesus displays ever anew the absolute and permanent religious significance of his own personality. It has been the aim of this sketch to show in general terms that his principles and personality are still of vital and supreme import to the ethical problems of civilization, and that the principles of moral renovation and progress resident in his influence are pertinent to the higher personal life to-day. In the complete relevancy and timeliness of the ethical principles of Jesus to the spiritual problems of the individual and social life of to-day as of all times we have an empirical test of the worth of his teaching.

And the perfect harmony of his ethical and spir-

<sup>1</sup> Meister, Eckhart, John Tauler, *The Theologia Germanica*, etc.

itual teaching with his personal character — the absolute incarnation of his doctrine in his life and action — constitutes the eternal meaning of his historical appearance. Jesus the Christ is for us the absolute revelation of the *spiritual meaning* of human existence. In the light of his personality and deeds the ethical aspirations and spiritual longings of mankind receive an ultimate interpretation and are given historic and actual standing ground in the world of our historical experience.

Hence Jesus is above all the *revealer*, the living incarnation of supreme spiritual values. For his revelation is not that of a book, not that of a cut and dried system, not that of an earthly organization. His revelation is the life and word and deed of an actual historic and yet eternally living personality — a personality contemporaneous with every age and responsive to every need of the spirit — a personality eternal in meaning, perennial in inspiration.<sup>1</sup> Jesus is the absolute revealer of the spiritual destiny of man. For he reveals by embodying the secret heart of the universal Father in his attitude toward humanity.

It does not fall within the plan of the present writing to discuss the theological problems involved in the statement of the relationship of Jesus Christ to the eternal Father. But the consideration of the powerful, unique, and abiding influence which the

<sup>1</sup> It is a striking fact that every movement of religious reform in the West has claimed to go back to the historical Christ.

historic personality of Jesus has exercised on the lives of men and on their ethical conceptions of God, together with the central position which Jesus' own person has ever occupied in the ethical and religious life connected with his historic appearance and teaching, involve some inference as to his ultimate relation to God.

If this historic personality so powerfully and uniquely influences men's ideas about God and so vitalizes their feelings of relationship to the Divine, then Jesus must stand in a *unique* relation to God. Confining ourselves to the standpoint of ethical experience and looking at the character and deeds of Jesus in the light of his teaching and of his social relationships, we must recognize that he was *absolutely good*. So far as human spiritual vision can penetrate Jesus was without spot or blemish — an utterly harmonious ethical personality. In him we find the absolute interpenetration of ideal and deed, of aspiration and resolve, and the final consequence or complete expression of this perfect integrity or harmony of character or life is his absolute ethical *oneness* with God. His will, his thought, the whole set and tendency of his personality, are in complete unison with the will of the Heavenly Father whose messenger he is.

As a matter of experience or personal insight, then, we must recognize that the ethical principles and the absolutely holy life of Jesus reach their culminating interpretation in his absolute ethical or spiritual one-

ness of character with God. The will of Jesus is in complete harmony with the Father's will. The personality of Jesus is in its central ethical or spiritual attributes *one* with God. In this sense the ethics of Jesus involves the recognition that he is the Son of God — the perfect realization of that Divine Sonship which other men possess in promise and potency. All are sons of God and heirs of eternal life. But Jesus Christ, the perfect son, remains uniquely one with God.

In the first place Jesus possessed and gave utterance to an absolutely unique *God-consciousness*. He stood in a unique relation to the Heavenly Father by virtue of the absolute originality and certainty of his knowledge of the Father's character. Religious teachers before him had indeed spoken of God as the Father of men and even of love as a Divine attribute; but with Jesus this Fatherhood of God has a new and vivid meaning, and Love, as the Supreme attribute of the Father, gets an entirely new sweep and depth of application. Jesus could not have taught this new doctrine of the Father with such power and authority if it had not been part and parcel of his own consciousness. One who dimly conceived in speculation or dream such a revolutionary doctrine would not have enunciated it with such convincing power. The mind of Jesus as presented to us in the gospels is, to say the least, one of extraordinary sanity, power, and balance; and this mind is pervaded through and through with

its new knowledge of God. To have made this knowledge the pivotal point in his whole life and teaching, a mind so clear and strong as Jesus' must indeed have been fully conscious of the verity of that intuition of God. It is entirely consonant with the whole character of his thought and activity that Jesus was fully aware of his possession of this unique God-consciousness, a knowledge which he could indeed impart to others but which in its pristine purity and power first belonged to him alone. When we take into account his entire career of teaching and work, nothing in the gospels rings truer than these words, "No man knoweth the Son but the Father: neither knoweth any man the Father save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him" (Matt. 11:27). And the beautiful invitation and promise which follows, "Come unto me all ye that labour, and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest" (Matt. 11:28), would be entirely out of place without this clear and certain filial consciousness. That he should extend such an invitation and make such a promise in view of the worldly hazards and difficulties of discipleship implies, in a character so sane and integral as that of Jesus, a knowledge of God so clear and certain that it passes the limits of ordinary humanity.

I have already said that so far as human eye can see, Jesus was morally perfect, an utterly harmonious ethical personality. His will was at all times completely one with the Perfect Will of the Father. This,

too, separates him from ordinary humanity. It is true, of course, that he himself does not separate his own moral will, as different in kind, from that which other men, as sons of God, may attain unto. To his disciples is given the command "to be perfect as your Father in Heaven is perfect" (Matt. 5:48). It is "my Father" (Matt. 26:39, Luke 22:29, etc.) and "your Father" (John 20:17). Purity and goodness are purity and goodness wherever found. St. Augustine's characterization of the virtues of the heathen as splendid vices is utterly opposed to the spirit of the Master who says, "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me" (Matt. 25:40). "Many shall come from the East and West, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven" (Matt. 8:11, Luke 13:29).

The difference in moral quality of will between Jesus and other good men, then, seems indeed a difference *in degree, not in kind*. But, if from candid study of that Life and Character we must say reverently and humbly — here alone do we find absolute harmony of a Human Will with the Will of God; here alone do we find Divine Perfection in a human life; in view of the spiritual solitariness and perfection of that character does not the difference in degree become a difference in kind? If one finds only one case in history and experience of absolute ethical perfection, does not that constitute an isolated instance, a wholly unique personality? Is not, then,



Jesus alone among the sons of men in this respect? Against this interpretation there is quoted the saying "Why callest thou me good? None is good, save one (that is) God" (Luke 18:19, Mark 10:7). But this was said to one not an intimate disciple, one who did not really know and sympathize with Jesus, probably one who came half in earnest, half in curiosity, with flattery on his lips, "Good master." Over against this case may be set the sayings, "One is your Master, even Christ" (Matt. 23:8, 10). "Which of you convinceth me of sin" (John 8:46), the passage referring to sin against the Son of Man (Matt. 12:31, 32, etc.).

Moreover, it is a fallacy arising from the divided and imperfectly organized character of our lives that in matters that concern conduct, spirit, personality, we set knowledge over against will. We speak of knowing the good and doing the evil because our knowledge of good is not a vital, personal possession. The knowledge that Mars is inhabited or that the square root of two is an irrational number is at present of no practical moment to me. In these modern days of the rapid accumulation and easy diffusion of purely theoretical knowledge we are prone to assume that knowledge is and may remain entirely separate from will; but, in truth, whatever knowledge be vitally assimilated must affect and find expression in character. Vital knowledge, knowledge that is actually part and parcel of my being, must somehow get expression in will either by way of deed or

restraint from deed. Personal and vital thinking is acting.<sup>1</sup>

In short, in the realm of inner realities, of the growth and activity of personal spirits, insight and action, knowledge and will, are two sides of the same process. Jesus' words, "Blessed are the pure in heart (*i.e.* in will and feeling) for they shall see (*i.e.* know) God," are in harmony with a sound psychology. Therefore, applying his words to his own case, and, in the light of a sound psychology of personality which can recognize no ultimate divorce between knowledge and action, *the moral perfection of Jesus and his unique God-consciousness are but two aspects of the same spiritual process or reality.* For the very unique insight or knowledge which he possessed was of a personal and ethical character, viz. knowledge of a Supreme Righteous and Loving Father; and to have possessed and imparted this knowledge, the Master must himself have been ethically perfect.

The entire teaching and work of Jesus Christ rests on the same presupposition which has underlain the movement of European civilization toward religious, industrial; intellectual, and social freedom, toward justice for all men, toward equality of opportunity and social democracy, toward, in short, freedom and scope for every individual, viz. that the lives of persons, realized in fellowship one with another, are the highest and worthiest realities

<sup>1</sup> On the motor aspect of ideas, see J. Royce, *Outlines of Psychology*, passim.

in the cosmos and that the principle of personality is the supreme and governing principle of things.

The ethics of Jesus, the ethics of spiritual democracy, the ethics of personality — these are convertible terms. If the faith in the ultimate reality of persons which is the ethical basis of our civilization be justified, then it is of the utmost moment to all our cultural and social activities that Jesus, who first clearly enunciated this faith and who is hence the moral leader of the vanguard of humanity, be — in the perfection of knowledge of the Father and in the harmony of his will with the supreme principle of things — indeed one with the Father. A God and Father of Persons revealed perfectly as to his spiritual nature and his purpose toward the race through a perfect man — faith in such is surely of the greatest moment to our civilization and its future.

Whatever formula we may adopt to express or describe it, faith in the unique oneness of the Man, Jesus Christ, with God — the moral Ruler of the Cosmos — is so far from being an antiquated theological abstraction or a coldly theoretical proposition that it has the most vital practical implications for society and civilization as well as for the individual soul.

If objection be raised that ethical or spiritual oneness with God, however unique, is not *substantial* or *metaphysical* identity with God, I should reply that, if one mean by *metaphysical* that which is ultimately real in the relations of persons, the *perfect*

*ethical* unity is the truly metaphysical. A substantial or metaphysical oneness which is not grounded on the ethical harmony of personal will with personal will must be material or quasi-material. The notion of a personal unity, if made dependent on the conception of some immovable eternal *substance*, is reduced to mechanical or materialistic terms. If Christ's unity with the Father were of this description, his personality must be absorbed or lost in that of the creative God. The highest and ultimate or most real type of unity is that of personal spirits—oneness of will, of heart, of character, and affection. It is in this sense, as the perfect embodiment or expression of God's *character*, as the absolute harmony of a human will with the will of the Heavenly Father, that we may say on grounds of ethical and spiritual experience and by way of necessary inference from our own communion with him that Jesus is the Son of God. In this sense we may well say that the ethics of Jesus Christ culminates in his Divine Human Personality, and that he is the absolute norm or standard of the Spiritual Life, and the Perfect Revelation of God's character.

## APPENDIX. ETHICS AND ESCHATOLOGY

THE synoptic gospels contain a large number of sayings in which Jesus proclaims the imminence of a crisis. The Kingdom of God shall come with power. The son of man shall appear in the clouds of heaven attended with legions of angels, etc. (See Matt. 16:27-28, 24:27-44, 26:64; Mark 13:8, 24-27, 14:62; Luke 12:40, 17:24-30, 21:27, 21:36, 22:16-18, etc.) Now, on their face, these utterances seem to announce the approaching end of the present world. Mundane human society and its affairs are to be wound up by the act of God who will so inaugurate his own perfect reign, vindicate the claims of the Son of Man, and establish him with supernatural power as judge of the world and ruler of the new order. These sayings are too prominent in the gospels to be easily disposed of either as legendary or figurative.

Now, it may be said that the ethics of our Lord do not apply, and are indeed irrelevant, to the affairs of life in a world in which no sudden cataclysm of this nature has literally taken place, in a world in which the ordinary concerns of life and industrial, artistic, scientific, and political activities have gone forward steadily since the days of their utterance. It may be claimed that Jesus Christ in his teaching takes no

account of family life, no account of art or industry or state, because he expected all these things to cease very soon. It is urged that the hard sayings—"Sell all that thou hast" (Luke 18:22, Matt. 19:21, etc.), "Let the dead bury their dead" (Matt. 8:22), "If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife and children, yea and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple" (Luke 14:26), etc.—clearly are spoken in the expectation of the immediate or speedy ending of the present earthly order and of the miraculous establishment of the Kingdom of God or perfect reign of righteousness. This Kingdom, it may be urged, has nothing in common with the earthly lot of men as we live and know it. "They neither marry nor are given in marriage" (Matt. 22:30, etc.). Hence, it is said, to talk about the application of the ethics of Christ to the activities of human civilization and the affairs of actual human society is to miss the entire issue of his teaching. Since this Kingdom has not come, we not only do not, but we *cannot*, live by his ethical principles. This is a serious charge. If it be sustained, the church and historical Christianity have been largely mistaken, the teachings of the Master have no bearing on the life of humane culture, and either we must leave the world or live in it in opposition to his spirit.

A way out of the difficulty may be sought by denying entirely the authenticity of these apocalyptic and eschatological sayings. A support to this way is supplied by the contention that Jesus Christ did not

call himself the Son of Man or claim to be the Messiah. I have already dealt briefly with these two points, but a few words may be added here.

The obvious and only satisfactory explanation of his trial and condemnation is that Jesus claimed to be the true Messiah; that he made his entry into Jerusalem and drove out the money-changers and preached in the temple under that claim. He was condemned and crucified at the instance of Jewish ecclesiastics as a false Messiah. He had run counter to their preconceived picture and hope of the Messiah and it was easy to give colour to the only charge that would strongly appeal to a Roman governor, viz. that Jesus was a stirrer-up of sedition.

Without the presupposition of a Messianic consciousness on Jesus' part it is impossible to account for the question at Cæsarea Phillipi with Peter's answer, "Thou art the Christ." And this narrative bears upon it the stamp of genuineness. Taken in its setting in the development of the Master's mission, this story has a uniqueness and verisimilitude that make it well-nigh inconceivable that it should have arisen without foundation in fact. Moreover, the narrative of the temptation, in Matt. 4:1-10 and Luke 4:1-13, is wholly inexplicable without Jesus' belief in his own Messiahship. Such a story could not have originated in the circle of disciples after his death. The growing faith of the primitive church in his supremacy over the world and in the

Divine character of his Mission do not account for its presence in the gospels. This faith would rather have tended to eliminate or slur over the idea of temptation just as it would tend to eliminate such utterances as "None is good, save One, that is God," "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" etc.

The story of the temptation is the record, in imaginative and pictorial setting, of three stages or phases of the inner conflict in the Master's spirit with the popular Messianic ideal of his own time and people. Admit his Messianic consciousness as becoming clear and dominating his spirit from the baptism by John and the meaning of the story of the temptation is clear. Full of the consciousness of his transcendent mission and of his correspondingly great powers, the *first* temptation, following the order in Luke, viz. wilderness, mountain, city, is that he shall claim exemption from the physical weakness and disabilities of ordinary humanity; the *second*, that, for the sake of a more rapid and easy acquisition of adherents, of a general acceptance of his message and allegiance to his person, he shall compromise with the powers that be, — with those forces in the nation which he regards as Satanic — the hypocritical legalists, Scribes and Pharisees, perhaps also with the Pagan forces of Rome; the *third*, that he shall demand from God a signal proof of his authority as messenger from on high by way of a miraculous demonstration of care for the person of the Messiah.



If Jesus, from the outset of his public career, believed himself to be the Messiah and yet could not at once reveal his claim, by reason of the inflammable state of popular feeling and expectation on this subject, since to evoke a premature popular movement would be to invite armed rebellion against Rome and to destroy utterly the spiritual and lasting character of his mission, it is quite obvious why he should employ a self-designation whose prophetic associations and spiritual meaning in Daniel 7:13 and in certain Psalms, notably Ps. 2 and 8, were at once sufficiently exalted and sufficiently vague to make it a fit vehicle of expression for the spiritual character and lofty nature of his mission without revealing generally and immediately his Messianic claims. Such a term was the "Son of Man." Its meaning was sufficiently vague and its associations lofty enough to enable Jesus, by use of it and by the illuminating context of his own teachings and deeds, to pour into the phrase a new, rich, and unique content.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The term "son of man" or "the man" in Daniel 7:13 does not seem to mean a definite individual but to stand for Israel; whereas in later Jewish apocalypics it means a heavenly, pre-existent being. In the Book of Enoch (Chaps. 37-70) he is a pre-existent being who comes with power and as judge to establish the new era. If the Book of Enoch be of pre-Christian date it is quite possible that the picture of the Son of Man therein presented was familiar to our Lord and to a small circle for which it would have a Messianic connotation. This is a suggestion of Sanday's in his *Outlines of the Life of Christ*. See Charles' translation of the Book of Enoch, especially Chaps. 46 and 48.

Sometimes when he uses it, this phrase expresses his utter humanity, his solidarity with the race. Sometimes again it emphasizes the unique meaning of his mission as founder of a new order. And, again, in the latter and bitter days it bears the weight of his confident faith that the Heavenly Father will in the time to come vindicate and seal with indisputable authority and power the mission of the Son. This is the meaning of such sayings as "I will not drink from henceforth of the fruit of the vine, until the Kingdom of God shall come" (Luke 22:18). Compare Mark 14:25.

If Jesus held himself to be the present founder of the Kingdom and the future Messiah, and believed that God would take care of that Kingdom by signal and direct exercise of power, then there is no passage in the synoptics which offers any serious difficulty in the way of the assumption that "the Son of Man" is a self-designation of our Lord, which points toward his future triumph. Only thus do such expressions as "No man knoweth the Son but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son" (Matt. 11:27) become intelligible. See also Matt. 17:5, 21:37 f.; Mark 9:7; Luke 12:8-10, 17:30, 18:8; John 6:62, 13:31, etc. There is no good evidence that the title "Son of Man" was a Messianic designation widely current in our Lord's day.<sup>1</sup> He probably took the notion from

<sup>1</sup> On this point see Dalman, *The Words of Jesus*, pp. 234 ff., and Driver's article "Son of Man" in Hastings' *Dictionary of the Bible*.

Daniel<sup>1</sup> and the psalms. But whatever his literary source, his supreme greatness in other respects warrants the assumption that, in his usage of this title to designate himself, he was bound by no tradition. He filled the title "Son of Man" with the content of the Isaianic "suffering servant of Jahweh" and, through his teaching and deeds, fused into an incomparable synthesis the notions of a Heaven-sent Messiah, of a Son of Man human in all respects, and of the "suffering servant" who by his lowliness, meekness, and suffering serves God and serves man.<sup>2</sup>

If, then, the term "Son of Man" were not a popular Messianic title in the days of Christ, and if almost until the end of his life he must carry alone in his bosom the tremendous burden of a Messiahship almost at all points antithetical to that current in his day as a secret only to be revealed when he chose to face the last inevitable crisis, it is surely reasonable

<sup>1</sup> It is quite possible that Jesus was familiar with the conception of the heavenly, preëxistent "Son of Man" of the similitudes of the Book of Enoch and that this character influenced his choice of the term, although this assumption is hardly necessary to account for his use of the term. Bousset points out that this latter conception of the Messiah was entirely foreign to the older prophetic and more characteristically Jewish ideas in which Messiah was an earthly king of Davidic lineage, not a heavenly and preëxistent visitant. As to the precise source of the latter notion we are in the dark. It appears full-fledged in the Book of Enoch. See Bousset, *Religion des Judenthums im neutestamentlichen Zeitalter*, pp. 304 ff.; article "Development of Doctrine in the Apocrypha" in Hastings' *Dictionary of the Bible*, Vol. V. Further references will be found in the latter work.

<sup>2</sup> Isaiah 53, etc.

to maintain that, believing as he did that God would vindicate him as Messiah and conscious from his baptism of his unique mission and position, Jesus would and could use, in the unique sense it must have had for his own consciousness, this plastic term "the Son of Man."<sup>1</sup> For this term both concealed and revealed his inner consciousness of his mission and position in relation to his Heavenly Father and his people. He used it in the third person because it was typical and anticipatory of the full declaration of his Messiahship and of God's future vindication of his work. It comprehended both the inner secret of his uniqueness, the greatness of his claims as Saviour and Judge and his full fellowship with man.

So understood the Son of Man is the future Messiah, the inaugurator of the long-expected Kingdom of God. What then is to be said in regard to the imagery in which the coming of this Kingdom is depicted? That this imagery was derived from current Jewish apocalyptic sources is, of course, very obvious. That Jesus himself made use to some extent of these images is a reasonable assumption; that his words thereon, in transmission and writing-down, were further coloured by the presence of this apocalyptic element in the minds of his disciples is an equally fair assumption. To appreciate the apocalyptic element in the gospels one

<sup>1</sup> The strongest argument against this view of the term "Son of Man" is that of Schmidt, *The Prophet of Nazareth*, Chap. V.

must consider carefully the ideas and beliefs of current Judaism. We must remember that the current Jewish conception of the expected Kingdom was not absolutely fixed and definite. It was plastic and indefinite.<sup>1</sup> It contained many elements, spiritual and political, religious and worldly, etc. Its apocalyptic framework was not stereotyped. It probably contained elements derived from Daniel and Ezekiel, later apocalyptic features like those of the Book of Enoch, the Psalter of Solomon, the Testament of the Patriarchs, etc. The older prophetic notion of the Kingdom was that of a political state with its capital at Jerusalem and the Messiah or anointed one of Davidic lineage as its first king.

Alongside of this notion there grew into prominence, perhaps shortly before the time of Christ, the notion of an entirely transcendent and other-worldly Kingdom or rule of God. This latter Kingdom was to be ushered in with great signs and wonders, in short with apocalyptic displays of Divine Power. Its coming was the close of one age, or æon, and the beginning of another—the age or, sometimes, the timeless æon of Divine Righteousness and Peace. This latter conception of the Kingdom, with its metaphysical and transcendent elements, was less political and more individualistic and spiritual than the older one; less social, but more directly ethical

<sup>1</sup> The study of the prophets and the post-exilic and apocryphal writings displays fully the plastic character of this conception.

and religious in colouring<sup>1</sup>; less Jewish and more universal. The form given to it was, presumably, influenced by Persian ideas. (The Persian faith, Mazdaism, too, looked for a Messiah, *Saoshyant*, who should inaugurate the absolute reign of Ahura-Mazda.) The affinity of Jesus' conception of the Kingdom was with the transcendent and ethical elements just mentioned. He stood always in sharp opposition to political, narrowly Jewish, and this-worldly ideas of the reign of Divine righteousness.

We may suppose that Jesus took up and filled with new ethical and religious content some of the current conceptions of an anticipated *æon* or time to come, in which God would judge and save the world through Messiah; separating the evil from the good, filling the latter with knowledge of Himself and of his peace and righteousness. But it is always to be borne in mind that, whatever notions the Master took up, and from whatever source, these were transformed and filled with a new ethical and spiritual dynamic and meaning by the vitalizing touch of his spirit. What separates Jesus' references to the full coming of the new Kingdom or *æon* from all contemporary notions — Jewish, Persian, or otherwise — is the unique content of faith and insight which breathes in his utterances and the dynamic spiritual energy which makes these utterances the determining

<sup>1</sup> See Bousset, *op. cit.*, Kap. XII., esp. pp. 255-266 and Kap. XIII., esp. pp. 297-308 and articles "Eschatology" in Cheyne's *Encyclopædia Biblica* and Hastings' *Dictionary of the Bible*.

factors in a marvellous spiritual transformation of the face of history. To-day we only study Jewish apocalypics or Persian ideas to gain some reflected light on conceptions that were unified in the alembic of a great spirit in the history of man, through whose power alone these conceptions have survived and have vital interest for us.

Doubtless the writers of the synoptic records, who had grown up and were steeped in the atmosphere of Jewish Messianic hopes and apocalyptic eschatological ideas, unconsciously coloured many of our Lord's saying with more vivid hues of the new æon. Perhaps such sayings as "Verily I say unto you, there be some of them that stand here, which shall in no wise taste of death, till they see the Son of Man coming in his Kingdom" (Matt. 16:28; Mark 9:1; Luke 9:27; compare Matt. 10:23) rest on a misapprehension as to meaning and context of an utterance of the Master in which he may have promised to those who accepted and stood by him in the great crisis, that they were thereby already passed from death into life and, whatever might happen to their bodies, their souls were secure in the heavenly or spiritual order which transcended the present earthly state. The famous saying, "The Kingdom of God cometh not with observation: neither shall one say, Lo here! or There! for lo, the Kingdom of God is within (or in the midst of) you" (Luke 17:20, 21), bears out this interpretation.

Noteworthy is the fact that Jesus always responded to those who asked for the immediate coming of the Kingdom in all its fulness not by any declaration as to the precise time or manner of its appearance, but by an exhortation to earnest endeavour and unceasing watchfulness. Compare Luke 19: 11-28, etc. Perhaps, too, such passages as Mark 13: 26 and Luke 21: 27, "And then shall they see the Son of Man coming in clouds with great power and glory," with their contexts so vividly descriptive of tribulation and suffering, of social confusion and natural catastrophes, are apocalyptic accretions or applications of current Jewish apocalyptic sayings, springing up in the disciples' minds from misunderstood sayings of the Master. Perhaps such passages as Matt. 24: 27-30 took their present form in some such manner. But when due allowance has been made for the sources of the imagery and details as to times and signs in all such passages, it remains unquestionable that these passages must rest on genuine sayings in which Jesus Christ himself announced his confidence in a coming judgment and a coming vindication of the truth of his message and of his inescapable claim to the allegiance of men. The prominence of the eschatological element in the gospels is inexplicable unless our Lord himself regarded the fuller and explicit advent of the Kingdom as a crisis which transcended all worldly affairs, unless he held that its coming would be sudden and with power and that he himself would be



recognized as its herald or Messiah. He looked to the Heavenly Father, on whom he always relied, for the installation of this power, and because he identified his own will so completely with that of the Father, he saw in the full appearance of the Kingdom the final fulfilment of his work and the explicit recognition of his person. Do these considerations involve the admission that his ethical teachings are irrelevant to the life of man in human society now and throughout the intervening years since his day on earth? This question has been in chief part answered by the whole argument of the previous work. If there is in the gospels a body of teaching of obvious pertinency to the problems of the common human life, then Jesus' gospel is no mere system of eschatology, although the eschatological element is a prominent feature of it. Moreover, is not an eschatological element bound up with every deep moral and religious faith? A great moral and spiritual leader must believe in the fulfilment of his aims. Without the faith that God — the Ruler of all things — is with him his teaching would have no moral and religious dynamic. It would fall flat as a mere philosopheme. The belief in the coming of his Kingdom with power and the confident proclamation of the fulfilment of his aims and the consummation of his work was inevitable. This faith in the ultimate cosmic victory of the spiritual order which he announces and inaugurates is an essential and inalienable element of Jesus' personal consciousness.

Must it not be always so? Does not a vital moral faith always involve the confidence in the triumph of its principles? Would not a moral principle however exalted, a spiritual insight however penetrating, fall nerveless to the ground unless sustained and borne aloft on the wings of a burning certainty of ultimate victory? Even Kant, cool philosopher though he was, looked forward with faith to the full realization of his moral ideas through the establishment of everlasting peace on earth. Faith in its ultimate victory and perfect fulfilment is of the very life-blood of ethical and spiritual conviction.

We may, and indeed must, interpret this consummation in other terms and with other imagery than those of the gospels; but if we accept the moral teaching of Christ with its tremendous issues for human life we must, too, assume and heartily believe in a *consummation*, a final goal which shall be reached and which is ever being reached through crises in the individual life and in history.

The ruthless earnestness, the heroic seriousness, with which men are challenged to seek first the Kingdom of God and its righteousness, to sell all they have, to let the dead bury their dead, to hate even father and mother, arise from a Divine Soul that calls the soul of man to awake from its lethargy, calls it out of the stagnant shallows of mere custom and worldly convention to embark on the deeps of the spiritual voyage of self-discovery, calls the soul at all costs and at all hazards to find itself in God. Sud-

denly and with power the Kingdom of God — the realm of the spiritual order — comes to him who manfully faces the tremendous and fateful issues of his spiritual being, who puts aside all hindrances that he may seek and find the absolute righteousness and joy of the Heavenly Father. Yes, Jesus did demand that men should pause and even turn away from the ordinary cares and affairs of life. He saw that these things often keep a man from finding his own soul.<sup>1</sup> The obligations laid upon the soul of man by him often seem superhuman and beyond the power of ordinary humanity. To turn away from or stop short in the career of the world, to face inner conflict, to make heroic choices and sacrifices, to seek *first* the Kingdom — these things Jesus demands of all. But it is because there resides in man the possibility of a new humanity, — of a spiritual “superman,” who is born not of caprice and wilful assertion but of absolute devotion to service, of unstinted forgiveness and love for man and God, that Jesus makes these heroic demands. The Kingdom of God comes with power wherever in the individual there is born, through the heroic deeds of spiritual faith, the “superhuman” consciousness of the absolute supremacy of Jesus’ ideal and of its power to lift humanity up to higher levels of insight, of spiritual life and deed.

Those who stress the eschatological element in the

<sup>1</sup> He spoke directly to disciples who must face with him the great crisis.

teaching of Jesus often exaggerate it.<sup>1</sup> But, to whomsoever is in earnest with that teaching and that life, it becomes a necessity of faith. His supremacy as a spiritual master means that he has a cosmic authority and that his principles can and will prevail.

And may one not even venture to suggest from this standpoint of faith that, since the ethical principles of Jesus are supremely valid, he is judge not only of the individual life but of the world? May it not be said that, in the terrible social and moral crises, through which the world makes progress slowly, his Kingdom ever comes with power? In every fresh social crisis, through the welter of suffering and bloodshed, of rapine and flame, there sounds in clearer tones the voice of moral justice; and when the smoke has cleared above the ruins, men know that had the principles of Jesus been

<sup>1</sup> E.g. J. Weiss in his *Die Lehre vom Reiche Gottes* so one-sidedly emphasizes the eschatological element that he is driven to assert that there is nothing novel in the ethics of Christ but that the source of his influence was just the faith-enkindling power of a supreme religious genius. From this standpoint Jesus was no teacher and the specific import of his parables and sayings are purely eschatological. They contain no social gospel and the individual is enjoined to practise neighbour-love, etc., simply to save himself, at the impending final judgment, into the reign of perfect blessedness. This view is a great and very one-sided exaggeration. A similar view is held in somewhat less one-sided form by W. Bousset, *Das Reich Gottes in der Predigt Jesu*, in *Theologische Rundschau*, Vol. V., pp. 397-407 and 437-449. On this and cognate questions a temperate and sound attitude is that of W. Sanday in his *Outlines of the Life of Christ*.

followed, this crisis would not have come. Every great historical struggle is a step on the road toward the fuller coming of his Kingdom. The miseries of the Middle Ages, the Thirty Years' War, the French Revolution, the present crisis in Russia, are salient instances in social life of the working out of moral judgments — crises through which the Kingdom of Righteousness comes with terrible power. If mankind will not otherwise hearken, then they must be so judged. The reign of righteousness must come with suffering and judgment before it can blossom in love and peace.

The superficial acceptance of the theory of evolution has blinded the eyes of this generation to the cataclysmic character of historical movements and fostered a superficial optimism of "progress" so-called. In truth every great moral advance of mankind has been won in blood and flame and tears. The Kingdom of the spirit comes with power, but in conflict and suffering. Mankind grows very slowly more rational and moral, its rulers often more slowly than its masses. But the time when "the war drum throbs no longer and the battle flag is furled" is perhaps measurably nearer. Through crises and suffering the Kingdom comes, and perhaps with each crisis more fully; the forces of discord are still abroad and doubtless will bring fresh conflicts and further judgments. We in the United States to-day may be walking on the crust which conceals a volcanic eruption of the forces of those who

have not against those who have. But, if the Kingdom of justice and love comes first with power in the hearts of many individuals, it will be saved from coming with blood and ruin as in former days and as it is even now coming in Russia.

Perhaps these remarks will have illustrated what I mean by saying that the eschatological element, the faith in a consummation, which is at the same time a judgment of the existing order, is of necessity part and parcel of the ethical teachings of Christ and that the recognition thereof, so far from destroying the relevancy of his teaching to the life of civilization to-day, a thousandfold enhances that relevancy. If the principles of Jesus Christ are absolutely supreme, then his Kingdom must come both to the individual and the world. The only alternative to this assumption is a moral indifference and pessimism.

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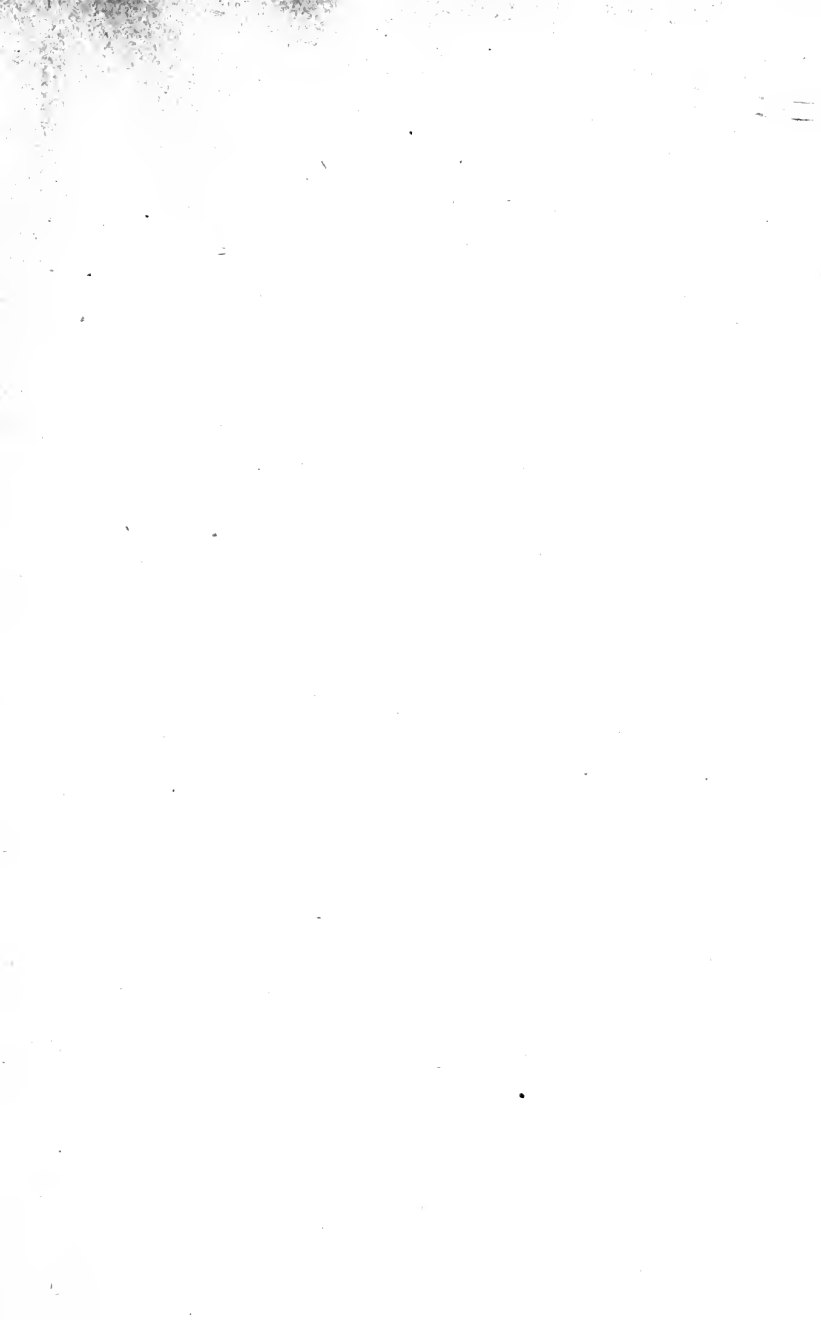
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